"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"

MBP-newsletter
Theme-edition
"How to reach schools"

"Migratory Birds for People" – Newsletter no. 37 / May, 2020

"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"

NEWSLETTER no. 37 (May, 2020)

Introduction:

During our Annual Meeting in Slimbridge (Oct. 2019) it was suggested to create an MBP-newsletter dedicated to a certain theme.
The suggestion for the first theme was **'how to reach schools'**.
We thank our colleagues for sending their contributions for this MBP-special.

Currently, most visitor centres will be closed due to the COVID-19 measures.
As a result, a lot of work in the centres has come to a standstill.
For the time being excursions and training activities will no longer be organised.
Maybe this time is therefore most appropriate to reflect together on the above mentioned theme.
We hope it may inspire you for future school programs.

Enjoy reading and stay healthy!

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

Audrey Cadou 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!

Contents list

Page:

" How to reach schools? "

With contributions from:

- **Finland, Liminka Bay Visitor Centre** **2**
- **Norway, Fetsund Lenser, Nordre Øyeren wetland centre** **4**
- **Sweden, Lake Tåkern** **6**
- **Belgium, Informatiecentrum Uitkerkse Polder** **10**
- **United Kingdom, Slimbridge Wetland Centre** **11**
- **France, Maison du Grand Lac de Lieu** **13**
- **Spain, Urdaibai Bird Center** **19**
- **Morocco, Centre d'Information Ecologique Oualida** **24**

- **Other Flyway news :** **29**
  - **MBP-Project : Learning map and Guidebook** **29**
  - **Eurosite: Proposal for Thematic Twinning** **29**
  - **Climate change threatens bird life in the Wadden Sea** **30**

"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"

NEWSLETTER no. 37 (May, 2020)

How to reach schools ?

We received the following contributions from our colleagues in the MBP-network.

Finland: Liminka Bay Visitor Center

During the COVID-19 epidemy we have had time to develop some long-needed learning materials for our exhibition. The epidemic also encouraged us to finally publish a **newsletter for the local teachers**.

Hopefully the newsletter will be sent out also after the epidemic.
Not all school classes are able to visit us every year, so it is good to keep in touch with the teachers and support their environmental education work in schools.

We have also started to publish **videos on social media** (YouTube, Facebook and InstagramTV).
The videos have been short tips on nature activities for those at home as well as more detailed birding tips for self-sufficient birding in nearby nature of the homes. You may check our first videos from the YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEIj9Jkl6kc&list=PLltXJb13PuvHR1pIssXVHd--353Nh2M7Q&index=2

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KCf0zU1lz0&list=PLltXJb13PuvHR1pIssXVHd--353Nh2M7Q&index=3

PS.
It must be mentioned that this spring has been the best bird spring for a long time because there is so much snow in Lapland that birds gather on the coastal area of Gulf of Bothnia and Liminka Bay to wait for snow melt in north.
In our area, e.g. flock of 35,000 **Snow buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)** has been observed!
In the picture there is "only" couple thousand.

Heli Suurkuukka

Exploring school class in Finland

Norway: Fetsund Lenser, Nordre Øyeren wetland centre

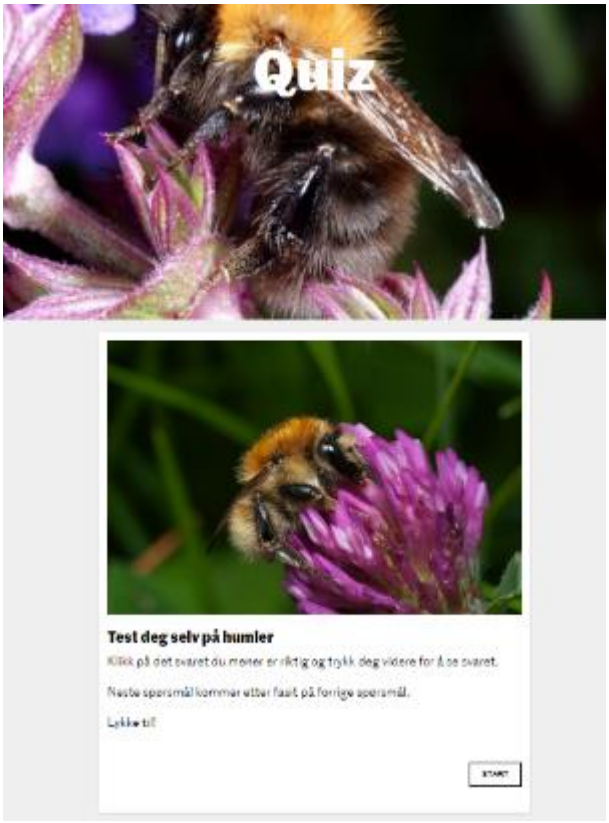
How to reach schools

Before closing our doors due to Covid-19 measures, we mainly had schools and pre-schools come to our centre for activities and excursions.
We also travelled out to schools who were not able to come to us. A common **challenge** for many of the schools is **the cost of transportation** to our centre, which is why we were trying to go to some of these schools instead.

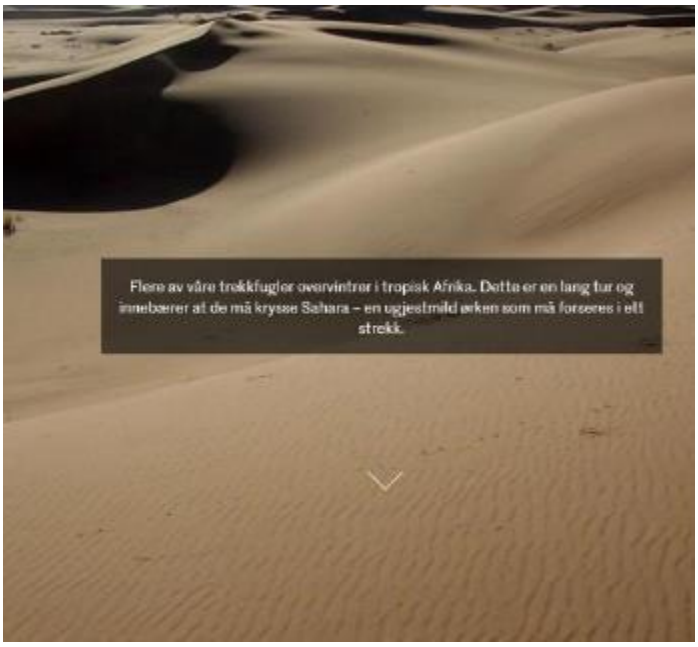
In the situation we are in now, we see the opportunity to communicate with the local schools and pre-schools in terms of how they adapt to re-opening with the strict measures in place for them.
Once the schools have started to re-open, our area is also available for the nearby schools and pre-schools to use. We are also trying to adapt some of our activities to comply to the Covid-19 measures in place both for us and the schools.

We have made an **online quiz** about bees for the public and schools to make use of which we hope to add more of.
Another option we have thought about is making short informational videos about our area that teachers can utilize if they so wish. We also made a nature bingo which people can download and tick off plants, animals, birds, etc. that they come across. In addition, we have made an online exhibition about the dangers of bird migration, and we are hoping to make more of these in the future with different themes.
The most important thing is to have good dialogue with schools and pre-schools to see how they are coping with their reopening. Once they have established good routines, we can support them with activities here at our visitor centre.

Screenshot of our downloadable nature bingo.



Screenshot of our online bee quiz.



Screenshot of our online exhibition about the dangers of bird migration.

Trude Starholm

"Inspiring birds, inspiring people"

NEWSLETTER no. 37 (May, 2020)

Sweden: Naturum Lake Tåkern

Naturum Tåkern, Glänås, Väderstad, Sweden 20200512

Naturum Tåkern visitor centre at Lake Tåkern a paradise for birds in Sweden

How to reach schools and work with nature interpretation at Naturum Tåkern

Introduction

Naturum Tåkern is a visitor center with exhibition, film, laboratory, educated guides and a small souvenir and coffee shop. Naturum is a concept owned by Swedish nature protection agency, and there are 33 different ones spread out all over Sweden. We offer nature interpretation to our visitors in many different forms, both with personal guides or on your own, indoors and outdoors. Naturum Tåkern wishes to interpret the values of the nature and culture around lake Tåkern to all of our visitors: e.g. the birdlife, the great biodiversity and many ecosystem services. In Sweden, lake Tåkern is well known for the many thousands of birds that breed or rest at the lake. Therefore, our nature interpretation often focus on the needs of migratory birds.

One of our most important groups of visitors are children and young persons. A very good way to reach them is through their schools. In a normal year we lead short or long nature interpretation with almost 100 school classes. Still, we wish more to come, and to extend the time for them to come, not only in springtime but all year round.

How we reach the schools in our region

Naturum Tåkern is not bound to one town or smaller region. We especially invite schools from all over Östergötland and northern Småland to come, and we accept bookings from schools all over Sweden and sometimes from abroad.

The normal procedure is one information letter before Christmas holidays to all levels of schools, one address per school in Östergötland, 13 municipalities, and Jönköping and Tranås in northern Småland.

We get the school addresses from Skolverket, the National agency for education, more than 400 addresses. In the beginning of next year we send the same information by email.

The information we send is about all we offer for schools, from free visit on opening hours to school excursion packages with different attractions or a full day outdoor education.
The offers are also available on our webpage, and on special flyers and program leaflet.

Schools need to book our personal interpretation offers via our website, and we charge 1000-2000 SEK (= ca. 100-200 €) per class max 25 children/group, depending on time.
Most school classes book a one hour school guided tour indoors and outdoors at the cost of 1000 SEK. For free, we offer 5 min introduction to the Naturum and lake Tåkern (if we can find the time)
The bus is not included in the price, and unfortunately this is by far the highest cost, approx. 4000-5000 SEK for a bus from Linköping or Norrköping, the major towns in Östergötland.

Ecosystem walks, pond dipping and birdwatching

Most popular, due to time and economy, is a short guided tour for one hour outdoors and about 15 min. inside the Naturum, to experience the typical natural environments and the exhibition. We visit the bird tower and take the boardwalk through the forest, the reedbeds and over the shore meadows, and get in close contact with the shallow rich water of lake Tåkern.

We experience the nature, the birds, the insects, the frogs and snakes etc. with all senses.
The guide shows the great biodiversity of lake Tåkern and the many **ecosystem services** offered to people. It may sound complicated, but it is always adjusted to the age of the children.

Pond dipping and sorting the animals species by species is popular at the outdoor education days, together with bird watching. Photo: Malin Granlund Feldt

Also popular are the full outdoor education days, often with pond dipping half day and bird watching the other half. Of course, they can also see the exhibition and film at the Naturum.
The school excursion package combines a visit to Naturum Tåkern with the famous Rökstenen and the ruins of Alvastra Abbey and the mountain of Omberg.

*Young persons from Gymnasium on the Strandpromenaden Walk, learning about **ecosystem services** from the reed beds of lake Tåkern. Photo: Malin Granlund Feldt*

Problems to reach schools

We have several problems with reaching schools today. First of all we have problems reaching **new schools**. Very few reply on the offers we send by letter and mail.
Most classes come from schools that already have the tradition to come to Tåkern and Naturum and - we guess - are depending on personal teachers who are interested in nature, birdlife and outdoor education.
We wish to reach many new schools, and especially from city center schools without nature contact in everyday life. In low season, from Oct-March, when we have more time, we make efforts to make phone calls and invite ourselves to target schools to talk about Tåkern and Naturum and what we offer on spot.

Spreading year round: Another problem is that traditionally all schools wish to make an excursion in nature in May-June, and we have too many bookings during those months. We wish to spread them out more evenly during the year.
We already offer half price if the booking is between October and March, but still, very few choose to come during that time. It's a pity, because Naturum offers great possibilities year round, and combine outdoor education with the warm and dry exhibition and laboratory inside the Naturum.

Travel costs: We also believe that one of the main reasons for schools not to come is the cost. Although the fee is subsidized by approx. half, its expensive for schools! Especially the bus is expensive. There is no public transport to Naturum Tåkern.

Tåkern fund project on "Birds and children"

One way for us to reach groups with no nature contact is to apply for project money from Tåkern fund. We are lucky to have some money that was given to the fund and earmarked for our work with children.

Group of children that just migrated to Sweden experience the lake with all sences.
Photo: Malin Granlund Feldt

For two years we applied for money to fully pay the visit of **groups of children just arrived to Sweden**, also the bus and school visit in advance.

This year we changed the project and call it ***"Birds for children with no nature contact".***

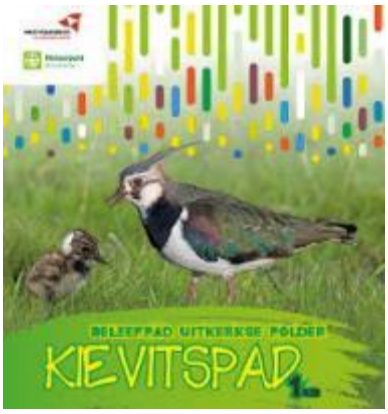
Text: Malin Granlund Feldt

Malin Granlund Feldt
Naturvägledare Guidesamordnare
Naturum Tåkern
Enheten för naturskötsel
Avdelningen för miljö och natur
Tfn: 010-223 53 85 mobile: +46 702242069
Länsstyrelsen Östergötland
Östgötagatan 3, 581 86 Linköping, Sverige

Belgium: Informatiecentrum Uitkerkse Polder

Blankenberge, 20 April 2020

Together with the children and the lapwing on a trip with the Natuurpunt app.



The Kievitspad in the Uitkerkse Polder is a nature experience trail for children from 3 to 12 years old. It is the perfect moment and the perfect opportunity to get out of your cot in Corona's time. The visitor centre and the play area are closed, but you can safely get off the **Kievitspad** (1 km).

Make sure you have the Natuurpunt route app in your pocket and bring binoculars. Put on your walking shoes and walk or bike to the Uitkerkse Polder visitor centre (Kuiperscheeweg 20, Blankenberge). Stand in front of the Kievit-totempole and start your adventure in nature with the route app. Follow the blue walking route. Do you see a lapwing on a signboard? Then it's time for action!

Your children's senses will be put to the test. At 10 stops they'll get a great do- or search. While playing, they will learn about the lapwing and some of its bird friends. Some are now breeding in the Uitkerkse Polder, such as the black-tailed godwit, the avocet and the redshank. Can you mock them with your binoculars? Others will not arrive until the winter, so be sure to come back later.

Fancy an extra challenge? Do right away, or later at your home in the garden, a couple of the 50 "Wild Outings". On this bucket list from Natuurpunt there are 50 challenges you have to do in nature before your 12th birthday: walking barefoot, following animal tracks, making nature art... and much more of that. Fun guaranteed.

Be sure to do it! Take your children on a "garden safari": search for butterflies, bees, beetles... Recognize the ticklish animals with the ObsIdentify app.

Don't worry: the coronavirus is not there, but the nature-microbe is!
Make sure your kids get that last one**.**
Because nature is ... the future of your children.

More info and downloads:

The Natuurpunt route app and the ObsIdentify app are available for free in the App Store (Apple) and in Google Play (Android).

- Natuurpunt route-app: www.natuurpunt.be/op-stap-met-de-route-app
- 50-dingen-kaart van Natuurpunt: www.natuurpunt.be/50dingen

Contact: *Anneleen Lybeer*

Natuurpunt bezoekerscentrum Uitkerkse Polder
Kuiperscheeweg 20, 8370 Blankenberge
E-mail: uitkerksepolder@natuurpunt.be

United Kingdom: Slimbridge

Learning and schools

Pond-dipping at Boondall wetland centre

Educating young people is seen as one of the most important ways of influencing how our wetlands may be managed in the future – what children learn at school directly influences how they go on to lead their adult lives.

Much of our work is done with **schools**, delivering structured educational activities, which may or may not form part of the recognised school syllabus. Working with schools can be challenging, and teachers need to be convinced of the importance of the environment as part of their course work.

Many links can be made from different areas of teaching to the natural environment. For example, history of wetland drainage and management, art using nature as inspiration, science (biology, chemistry, physics), and even performing arts.

It is also important to remember that we all carry on learning into our adult lives, and outside of the formal education system. We work with families, the general public and communities to deliver education, through **non-formal education** activities. You may like to visit WWT's Learn pages, which are packed full of useful information and activities for all ages of school children.

Below are just a few of the resources that might help you run a range of educational activities – we will be adding to this as members send in more resources.

Primary school (under 12 years old)

Daphnia puppet, lake Biwa

WWT's learn site gives you a a range of teaching resources aimed at primary school children, including stories, sounds and games. WWF Hong Kong have produced a climate change game called STEP aimed at primary school children. At Lake Biwa they have a range of resources including a puppet show with puppets of wetland animals – including a really cool Daphnia puppet (see above !)

For teaching plans and other resources, Ducks Unlimited Canada have a great resources page, including lesson plans, facts on wetlands, video footage and information for farmers and landowners. The International Crane Foundation have a good site for resources for educators, as well as for students. Also, see the Earth Day, 22nd April, website which has educational materials and ideas, and there is a lesson plan based on water from the same website.

Cornell Bird Lab has also produced resources around bird-watching and science as part of their Bird Sleuth programme.

The Children and Nature Network in the US was created to restore the link between the natural environment and children's wellbeing. The Australian Government has also produced a website on discovering wetlands, with school resources, games and even origami creatures. Manly environment centre (Australia) also has a good schools resources page, wild about wetlands.

Eco Footprinting is being used by the Welsh Assembly Government as a baseline indicator for sustainability. Their aim is for Wales to become a one planet nation within the lifetime of a generation.

Secondary school (12-16 years old)

Check out the Green Teacher site, with it's interactive flipping magazine. MedWet also has a schools page showing the activities that they have done with young people, with videos, games and activities. WWT has recently developed a SuDS (Sustainable Drainage) project for schools, with materials, for both secondary and primary schools. You can see more at specific schools from the project here.

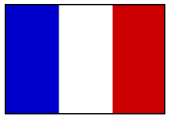
Adult and non-formal education (18 years old +)

Guandu Nature Park

The RSPB (a UK bird conservation NGO) has produced a CD with games called 'Wild and Wonderful' based on habitats, migration and bird species, available for £10 sterling from education@rspb.org.uk, check the RSPB resources page for more info. Suitable for adults and children. Charges may be waived for partners in developing countries. The CD includes versions with no text that can be adapted for your own language / situation.

You can also do courses on weltand management with UNESCO, who run a distance learning course on many aspects of wetlands and water management. The Ramsar CEPA panel has produced a guide to CEPA activities on site, useful as an introduction to site managers.

WLI coordinates Birds and Schools, an enjoyable event where school children meet their peers in other parts of the flyway by video conference.



France: La Maison du Grand Lac de Lieu

How to reach schools: strategies of the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre

A brief account of the context.

In September 2014, a new visitor centre dedicated to wetlands was opened: The Grand-Lieu Lake Centre.

This centre project was initiated by the 'Loire-Atlantique' territory (French department) collaboratively with the Coastal conservation authority, and with the support of institutional partners*. This new wetlands' centre is located in Bouaye (Western France) and allows to see the lake of Grand-Lieu in the national nature reserve. The management of Grand-Lieu Lake Centre was delegated to the '*Loire Atlantique-Développement*' agency.

In France, the administrative division into Departments (there are 101 of them) allows to assert educational competence intended for primary and secondary schools by territory. As an environmental education centre of the 'Loire-Atlantique' Department, one of the main public services of the centre was to host schoolchildren thanks to a very affordable entrance fee. In order to achieve this service and to inform schools about the new centre opening, an expert council was created before the opening. This council is composed of local organisations (scientists and naturalists) and professionals from the National Education, the Education office of Nantes Academy, and Catholic Education.
The teaching manager of the centre, Olivier Morin, arrived three months before the opening.
His work was focus on the development of activities, taking into account the available areas and site regulations.

How to reach schoolchildren and young people?

The arrival of schoolchildren was done gradually.
First, the teachers who already knew the project came out of curiosity with their pupils to discover the centre.
The communication was mainly done through the websites of our educational partners, to whom we sent an educational draft as well as some workshops that could correspond to their expectations. The first year was not only to test some activities, but also to promote awareness of the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre through quality of activities.
Therefore, a positive word-of-mouth spread quickly. The first communication brochure on the educational program was made in September 2015, after one year of operation. This brochure presented different activities according to the grade for six to twelve years old pupils.

The teaching manager of the centre, Olivier Morin, was a school teacher. He knows the official texts of National Education and he identifies the skills that are targeted for each grade, throughout the pupil schooling. These official texts are necessary to provide a framework for learning. They allow to know the objectives expected in each discipline (concepts covered, vocabulary to be used). These texts were the first version supports of a communication brochure for teachers that used keywords for each activity.

During the first year the centre hosted around 1,000 pupils from September to June. The publication of the communication brochure was an asset to develop school attendance at the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre as, in 2019, we raised the awareness of 3,200 pupils.
We are also fortunate to appear in the territorial "school" brochure, produced by our colleagues from the tourism department at the 'Loire-Atlantique-Développement' agency.

Communication brochures for schools

How to ensure a good attendance of the centre?

First of all, we pay attention to propose **different activities from other naturalist organisations** or structures in the same area. The educational offering is rich in the territory.
It is essential to **maintain a complementarity between activities with our partners and colleagues**. Educational offer watch and innovation are the bases to ensure the centre sustainability.
For example, there is a Centre of the Grand-Lieu Lake Fishermen on another lake shore which is dedicated to fishing traditions. Therefore, we do not propose activities on fish species of the lake.

During their schooling a pupil does not work on the same concepts. From discovering the environment to learning the natural sciences there are many steps to follow. This academic progression must be taken into account in order to avoid proposal of same activities to children if they go back to the centre the following years.

Table. Some activities of the centre that take academic progression into account:

<6 years of age	6-10 years of age	11-14 years of age	>15 years of age
An observation of nature through reading children's stories and books Discover the exhibitions in a fun way An example of a workshop: the function of feathers in birds Artistic creation: a nest	Discover environment through surveys, or landscape drawings Understand what an ecosystem and food chains are Understand the bird migration process through a board game	Address ecological relationships in an ecosystem Address the impact of humans on biodiversity using current scientific figures and articles	Identify common wetland species. Understand the natural area management choices.

Sensory discovery of wet meadows and bird watching in front of the lake

A relationship of trust was built between educational training teams and the staff of the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre.
This relationship allows to respond to teacher requests with precision and to develop with them a project that can be implemented during several visits over the year. Thus, we work on the Grand-Lieu Lake during different seasons according to a selected issue: animals' adaptation to climatic constraints, the evolution of vegetation, etc. This also allows us to work closely with partner organisations that are involved in some activities.
Sometimes we develop an activity for a class, such as the challenge on animals' diet or the workshop on seed dispersal. This workshop will be in the communication brochure the next year if it is in keeping with the new academic programme.

After 3 years of work with local schools, it seemed relevant to us to get involved in larger projects in order to give added value to centre activities. We participated to the **World Migratory Bird Day (**WMBD), initiated by MBP partners, or on projects mixing architecture and landscape.
For these projects, schools are selected following a call for applications and pupils can benefit from free entry to the centre.

Landscape activities with architects Video conference for the WMBD in 2018

We progressively integrate national and international networks (Ramsar France, WLI, MBP) or participate to national events like the Science Festival that allows to meet pupils from different school and contributes to the structure notoriety.
We also worked on a comparative study between the Grand-Lieu Lake and the Saint Pierre Lake in Quebec, in partnership with the Biophare, another centre dedicated to wetlands and in agreement with the Ministry of Education. It was a great project between two schools, resulted in the development of a website by pupils which is offered to children of similar ages (10-11 years of age).

Home page of the "Human and the Lake" website and interview of a wildlife manager for the France-Quebec project

Keep the link with children

Pupils, as young public visitors, might want to come back to the centre with their families for leisure. Therefore, activities proposed during holidays are different to activities proposed to schools.
We prioritize the pleasure of being together, rather than academic objectives.

During the holidays, the Grand-Lieu Lake Centre also proposed activities for children aged 3 to 5 years like hands-on creative learning workshops related to wetlands (plasticine dragonflies, stork paintings, frogs in wool pompoms) and environment protection.
It is also an opportunity to take the time to focus on emblematic species of the Grand-Lieu Lake like the White Spoonbill, Whiskered Tern, etc.) or to offer story-telling disguised activities for all audiences.

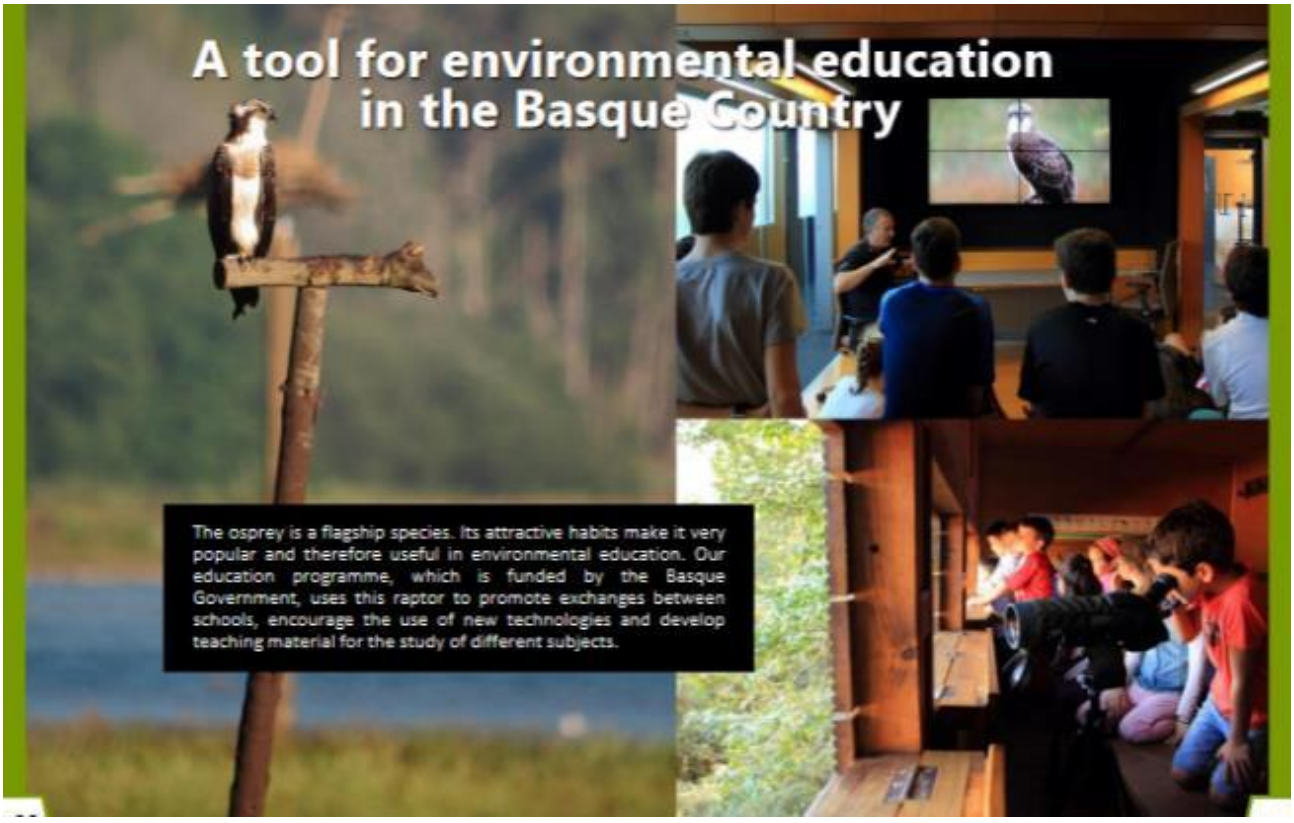
Plasticine dragonflies and Mister Fox telling the story of the nature reserve.

Already 5 years have passed since the centre opening, during which the team has endeavoured to welcome all audiences through visits, workshops, cultural and scientific events, exhibitions in order to inform, amaze, but also to awaken the collective conscience to wetland services.
So many awareness actions developed for a specific purpose: **understanding the need to protect these natural environments.**

**The Grand-Lieu Lake Centre benefited from financial support from the 'Loire-Atlantique' Department, the* Coastal conservation authority *('Conservatoire du Littoral et des rivages lacustres'), the 'Pays de la Loire' Region, the State, and Europe.*

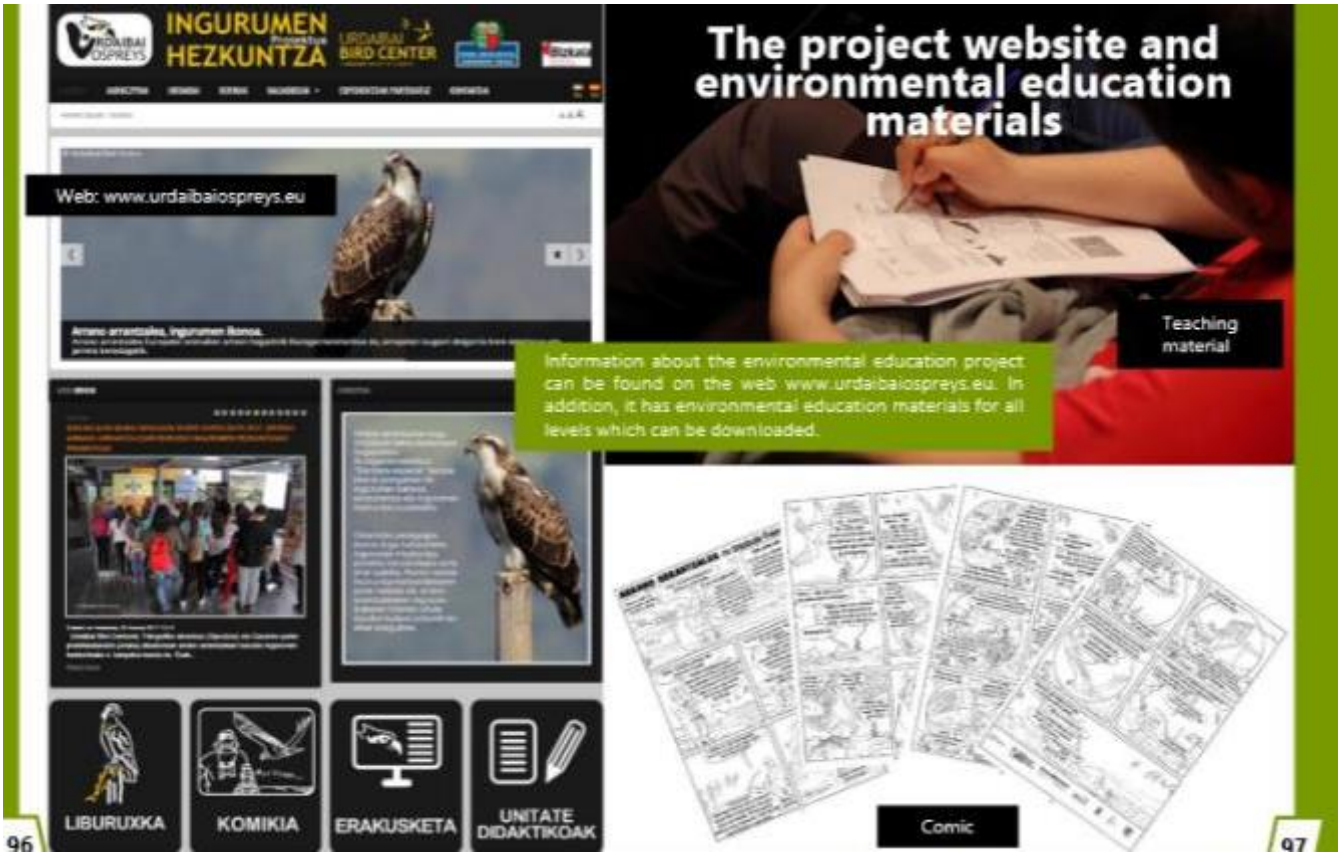
Cordially,
Olivier Morin – teaching manager
Audrey Cadou – ecologist
La Maison du Lac de Grand-Lieu

Spain: Urdaibai Bird Center



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	TOTAL
Urdaibai Bird Center	892	1.363	1.009	997	1.342	5.603
Txingudiko padurak	432	445	467	515	349	2.208
Garaio			200	52	469	721
SCHOOL TOTALS	1.324	1.808	667	1.564	2.160	8.532

Students from Urdaibai schools connected with school children from Italy and the Gambia
The first ospreys arrive in Europe in March. Coinciding with their arrival, Basque schools share their work on the osprey with schools from other countries such as England, Italy, the Gambia and the USA.
Students from the Urretxindorra (Muxika) and Montorre (Gautegiz Arteaga) schools connected with other students from the Basque Country.
94
95


INGURUMEN HEZKUNTZA
URDAIBAI BIRD CENTER
Web: www.urdaibaiospreys.eu
LIBURUXKA
KOMIKIA
ERAKUSKETA
UNITATE DIDAKTIKOAK
96
The project website and environmental education materials
Teaching material
Information about the environmental education project can be found on the web www.urdaibaiospreys.eu. In addition, it has environmental education materials for all levels which can be downloaded.
Comic
97

ARRANO ARRANTZALEA
The itinerant exhibition consists of seven panels that have been on display in schools and cultural centres.
Theatre Lizeo Antzokia in Gernika
Nestor Basterretxea Aretoa in Bermeo
98
99

Exhibition panels
ARRANO ARRANTZALEA
ARRANO ARRANTZALEA

Exhibition panels
OSPREY
School children working together with the Osprey in a global network
Basque Country
Spain
England
Scotland
Ukraine
Gambia
WOW
BOW
ARRANO ARRANTZALEA
JATORRI NATURALEKO
AMENAZAS
GIZAKIAK RAGINDAKO
AMENAZAS
Dorre elektrikoak eta hazte errotak
Arrantza sare xehesk
Pestizidak
Ezkutuko ehiza
102

Nestor Basterretxea Aretoa in Bermeo
Theatre Lizeo Antzokia in Gernika
School children will be the future guardians of the osprey. In order to actively involve students in their conservation, talks are given in halls and theaters in Gernika, Bermeo and Busturia.
Cultural Centre in Altamira, Busturia
Nestor Basterretxea Aretoa in Bermeo
104

Morocco, Centre d'Information Ecologique Oualida

GREPOM/BirdLife Maroc

How to reach the schools?

The school is a vehicle for raising awareness of environmental protection.

For a healthy lifestyle, children need to be positively educated about the environment in order to develop awareness and a sense of participation, and to help them acquire knowledge about ecological principles aimed at finding a balance between individual health and that of society and the environment.

The Ecological Information Centre of Oualidia plays an important role in raising awareness among the general public, especially schoolchildren, of the importance of wetlands as vital stopovers for birds to feed and rest, with a focus on the Sidi Moussa-Oualidia Ramsar Site. This role is determined in the objectives set for this reception centre, namely ;

- Raise public awareness of the heritage and socio-economic importance of wetlands generally in the country and especially in the region.
- To provide educational institutions with tools for illustrating courses in Life and Earth Sciences.

In the same way, guided tours of the Wetlands of Oualidia are regularly programmed with the aim of :

- Guided observation of the components of the ecosystem and its functioning.
- Identification of components of heritage and socio-economic value
- Identification of threats to identified values
- Group discussion on various aspects related to the visit

To achieve these goals, and to attract more groups of visitors to our Visitor Centre, a central pillar of our strategy is to promote innovative collaborative partnerships between the Centre and other organizations that receive school children and whose common interest is in education, environmental awareness, and ecotourism.

» Engagement with Surfland Oualida

Within the framework of the region's exceptional water sports, with the particular advantage of the surfing conditions in the bay and lagoon guaranteeing ideal conditions for surfing initiation and daily practice in complete safety, the Surfland Oualidia club offers surfing holidays for children and young people.

Very often the lessons about the environment take place in class without any direct relation with nature, this is where the idea of developing the formula "Classes de Mer" between this first surf club in Morocco and schools came from.

This formula consists in the organization of information and educational stays based on an educational project linked to the themes of the site, in particular its ecotourism vocation, its natural wealth, and the exceptional biotopes it offers, with an effect of socialization of the groups and the learning of "living together". These days also come through initiatives of the teachers.

In addition to a wide range of services and educational, sporting and cultural activities, the programme of the stay often includes a visit to our Ecological Information Centre in Oualidia to discover the area:

- -The lagoon complex of Oualidia and its ecological and economic values;
- -The relationship between the shape of the birds' beaks and their diet;
- -Food chain;
- -Bird migration;
- -Role of wetlands in hosting birds during migration periods for resting and feeding.
- -Examples of wetland birds.
- -In addition to a birdwaching session in the lagoon.

The success of this "discovery" stay, is based on the educational program offered in an entertaining setting, and thanks to this range of activities, children are much more aware of the messages of environmental protection awareness namely birds. This encourages large schools to commit themselves to this club for the continuous organization of these stays.

»Cooperation with Laguna park

At the edge of the Atlantic, the site of Oualidia is curiously spared by seaside tourism, the place is wonderful to relax, walk along the fine sandy beaches, contemplate the beautiful lagoon, lined with cliffs, discover the salt marshes, and admire all kinds of water birds very surprising. It is also a paradise for lovers of marine sports, and a good place for oyster and other seafood gourmets thanks to its oyster parks.

Therefore this city where our reception centre is located is fortunately a tourist destination par excellence for tourists looking for this pleasure. Of course these national and international tourists are looking for accommodation from the moment they arrive to spend their stay. GREPOM's strategy was to engage in a collaboration with one of the main commercial establishments that offer accommodation services and suggest programmes of walks and excursions in Oualidia, with the aim of promoting the centre through these establishments.

Within the framework of this strategy **GREPOM has signed a cooperation agreement with the Laguna park** camping caravaning considering the convergence and complementarity between the missions of both parties in the field of education, awareness, environment and ecotourism.

The main objective of this convention is to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and know-how between the two parties, for the benefit of the improvement of their respective missions and the protection of natural resources and the environment in general in the country and mainly in the region.

In order to achieve the objectives, the two parties have committed themselves to a number of actions among others :

- Jointly carrying out actions and programmes of training, education and awareness-raising for young people in the fields of environmental protection.
- Exchange scientific, pedagogical and technical documentation
- Co-organizing scientific and didactic meetings and training sessions
- Produce and disseminate documents on the themes of environmental education and ecotourism.
- Drain groups of visitors to the lagoon of Oualidia and its marshes.
- To guide visitors to the level of information and to make field visits to them.
- Promoting Oualidia and its ecological site through training and awareness-raising trips to schools.

» Spring Alive Program

Within the framework of the project "A first step towards the protection of birds in the Safi quarry and its surroundings" in partnership with HeidelbergCement, Ciments du Maroc, and Birdlife International, and through the Spring Alive programme, which is an international project aimed at encouraging children's thinking and stimulating their interest in nature and the conservation of migratory birds, and encouraging them to take conservation measures for birds, nature and the environment, we were able to run workshops for schoolchildren in the visitor centre.

This was a good opportunity to build a relationship with ciment du Maroc, a subsidiary of the HeidelbergCement Group. This partnership was based on shared values of sustainable use of natural resources while promoting rich biodiversity and is intended to be a channel, discussion and information dissemination on issues related to biodiversity protection and bird conservation in the quarry and its surroundings.

Our actions were mainly focused on raising awareness among schoolchildren about the importance of the biodiversity of the quarry and the bird migration route. The schoolchildren had an appointment with several presentations at the Ecological Information Centre of Oualidia (not far from the chosen quarry) among others the phenomenon of bird migration, followed by a birdwachnig session in the lagoon and competitive games during the visit of the quarry.

As part of the Spring Alive programme we have signed a project partnership with BirdLife Poland and with the financial support of HeidelbergCement. The mission of the centre in collaboration with the GREPOM central office was to organise various workshops and presentations in the framework of awareness days under the theme "bird migration and collisions". More than 220 school children and their teachers participated in these workshops.

The aim of these workshops was to integrate the welfare of human populations, including children, into bird protection and to raise awareness among the local population, especially schoolchildren, of the value of biodiversity and the obstacles inherent to its preservation;

These workshops were held at the Oualida Ecological Information Centre, so the centre also provided workshops for the benefit of public schools that were not able to provide transportation for schoolchildren to the centre.

» Training days and celebrations

The CIEO, managed and animated by GREPOM, continues to bring public and private institutions together, throughout the year and during the celebration of the various international days, through the initiative of the school or the centre, to play its role in informing and raising awareness among schoolchildren through extra-curricular activities, to enable them to stimulate children's curiosity and alertness and to encourage them to become actively involved from an early age.

Nowadays, the centre is very well known by the regional delegation of education of Safi for the quality of the supervision and the awareness days it provides, hence the ease of obtaining authorizations whenever necessary for the implementation of activities. Also, the reception centre is always ready to make awareness visits to public schools where travel would be impractical.

The centre has also established good relations with other associations that are in direct contact with schoolchildren, who in turn bring groups of pupils to the centre to benefit from the educational programme.

CIEO in figures /2019

- **More than 200 visits from national and international tourists**
- **More than 2,000 students and teachers affected**
- **30 Field trips**
- **52 schools and associations visited the centre**

Other Flyway news

PROJECT: Learning Map and Guidebook

Our special **10th Anniversary learning map of the East Atlantic Flyway** is now with our colleagues in Tåkern, Terschelling, Remerschen, Oostvaardersplassen, EVOA, and Urdaibai.

The next step is to get a really good user-guide together, sharing games and knowledge so that everyone can make the most of it.

We have received all the updated information and the Guidebook has been sent to the designer to get the final design.

Our goal was to have this available to everyone in time for World Migratory Bird Day on 9 May 2020.

We will inform you with the latest update from time to time in our social networks especially the Instagram account.

News from our MBP-partner EUROSITE:

Proposal for Thematic Twinning

Because this is a new situation for all of us, we think that we should use the strength of the network in overcoming challenges the outbreak brings along. Therefore, **we have prepared a proposal for a thematic twinning on recreation and nature conservation in a post-lockdown society as a way to exchange information and experience with each other** now measures are gradually being lifted in most European countries. This new reality forces many organisations managing (a) natural area(s) to come up with new approaches and work methods. The goal of this twinning is to exchange information and ideas and to together develop methods to help site managers deal with the new reality. It will contribute to identifying efficient ways of managing natural sites in multiple aspects, ranging from rules concerning the employment of volunteers to one-way directions on hiking paths, and from conservation activities in the field to ensuring the safety of visitors of the area(s).

Normally, a twinning takes place between merely two partners. However, through a thematic twinning, multiple partners can participate and share knowledge on a specific theme. I would

hereby like to ask you to have a look at the proposal and let me know if your organisation is interested in joining this (short-term) twinning **before Wednesday, 10th of June**

Best wishes on behalf of the whole Secretariat,
Jelke

Jelke Brandehof
Communications and Membership Officer
Eurosite
Working days: Monday -Thursday

Jules de Beerstraat 14-01 | 5048 AH Tilburg | The Netherlands
Tel: +31 (0)85 086 13 63
email: jbrandehof@eurosite.org
www.eurosite.org

Climate change threatens migratory birds in the Wadden Sea

NIOZ Royal Dutch Institute for Sea Research, PRW, Vogelbescherming Nederland
7-MEI-2020 –

There are clear signs that climate change is happening faster than was generally thought just a few years ago. This is already causing major threats to birds using the East Atlantic migratory route. For example, the report 'Effects of climate change on birds in the Wadden area' commissioned by the Programme to a Rich Wadden Sea.

Programme "Naar een Rijke Waddenzee"(PRW) has commissioned the Wadden Academy to map, based on existing scientific publications, what the accelerated climate change means for the birds using the East Atlantic migratory route. The report Effects of climate change on birds in the Wadden area (pdf: 5,7 MB) by expert Jeroen Reneerkens contains the findings and conclusions of the study. And they give cause for concern. Climate change is often seen as a problem of the future, but it is clear that climate change is already posing major threats to migratory birds

.

Great influence

In the report Reneerkens assesses the scientific literature on this subject in order to be able to describe the potential effects of climate change on migratory and breeding birds that use the Wadden Sea. Climate change has a major impact on the habitats of birds along their entire migratory route. Reneerkens: "Conditions in the breeding areas of wadden birds around the Arctic Circle are already changing significantly; climate warming is happening there even faster than it is here. If the global temperature rises by an average of two degrees Celsius, it could be four degrees Celsius in the Arctic. Shellfish in the Wadden Sea, an important source of food for the birds, can die en masse during heat waves. These are problems that already occur in the short term. In the longer term, accelerated sea level rise can also lead to the drowning of mud flats, preventing birds from foraging there. And nests on salt marshes will wash away more often during spring storms."

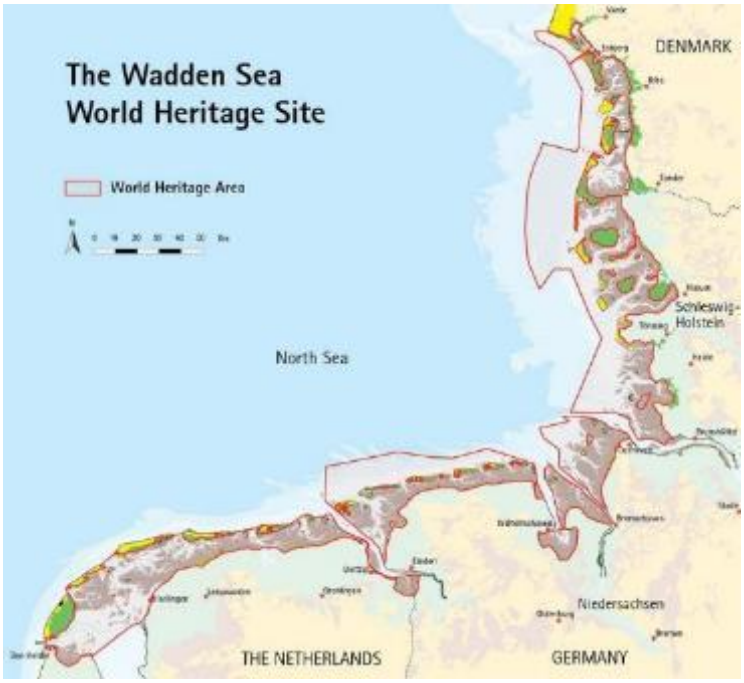
The Wadden Sea lies at a crossroads of bird migration routes that connect the Arctic with the European and African coasts. Compared to the Arctic, there is still little knowledge (bold symbols) about the effects of climate change on birds in the Wadden Sea. Such as decrease in suitable habitat (waves), changed ecological interactions (arrows), changes in phenology (clock) or changes in distribution (globe). (Source: Jeroen Reneerkens)

Cumulative

All climate effects together have a cumulative impact, the consequences of which are not yet foreseeable. Jeroen Reneerkens: "It is likely that the chances of survival and reproductive success for migratory birds will decrease even more than we now know on the basis of independent studies. We cannot stop climate change. However, through better management of the Wadden Sea, we can offer birds the opportunity to better cope with its effects. After all, if the birds are healthier and suffer less from other (human) pressure factors, they will be better able to cope with the changing circumstances".
Working together on a package of measures
It is important to mitigate the consequences of climate change for birds within the Wadden Sea area. In particular by continuing to allow the birds to forage and rest and, if possible, to expand. PRW is therefore taking the initiative, together with nature managers and authorities in the Wadden area, to develop a package of measures to that end in 2020.

Circumstances as optimal as possible

Jonna van Ulzen of PRW: "We cannot solve all the consequences of climate change along the migratory routes. Based on our responsibility to protect the ecosystem of the Wadden Sea, including the many thousands of birds that spend the winter in the area or use it as a refuelling station and resting place on their migratory routes, we can jointly ensure that the conditions here are as optimal as possible.



The Wadden Sea is already an essential place along the migration route. If the conditions here improve, it will not only be good for the local birds, but it will also give them a greater chance of adapting to the changing climate elsewhere along the migratory routes. In order to achieve this, we will have to work together with all the managers and users of the Wadden Sea area". More research needed

More research will also be needed to better understand how climate change impacts on migratory birds and their environment and what action is needed to address it. There is as yet no coherent research programme on the effects of climate change on the natural values of the Wadden Sea, and thus on migratory birds. It is high time this was set up.

Text: Jonna van Ulzen, PRW / Vogelbescherming Nederland and Jeroen Reneerkens, NIOZ
Images: Joop van Houten, Rijkswaterstaat; Jeroen Reneerkens