



Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force News Bulletin No 20 · May 2019



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Mekong Delta, 19 Jan 2019

Nguyen Manh Hiep

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The Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) News Bulletin is a regular, half-yearly update of activities of the SBS Task Force of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP). The News Bulletin is edited by Dr Christoph Zöckler, Coordinator of the EAAFP SBS Task Force with assistance from Sayam Chowdhury, Bangladesh.

Mission:

The East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) aims to coordinate the conservation activities identified in the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Single Species Action Plan for the species, which was commissioned by BirdLife International. The activities in the Action Plan are regularly reviewed and updated by all Flyway Members and a growing network of active supporters and groups in the Flyway countries, and beyond.

The Task Force originates from the establishment of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Recovery Team (SBS RT) in 2004, when several partners active in the conservation of this globally threatened wader met in Edinburgh. With the growing level of activity, the finalization of the Action Plan in 2008 and a growing network of partners, organisations and supporters the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) was formed at the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) meeting in Korea in February 2010. In December 2010, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) was officially endorsed as one of the first species Task Forces by the Partnership under the EAAFP Shorebird Working Group. Implementing organisation for the SBS TF is BirdLife International through its partner Birds Russia. It is chaired by the Government Partner of Russia. Task Force members consist of the EAAFP Government Partners of key range states for the species and international conservation organisations. These are: the Russian Federation, Japan, People's Republic of China, People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Union of Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India, the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT), Wetlands International, a representative of the EAAFP Shorebird Working Group, Fauna Flora International (FFI) and experts and conservation organisations from principal range states and other partners. We are grateful to the RSPB, NABU and the Manfred-Hermsen-Stiftung for their continued support of the SBS Task Force and Spoon-billed Sandpiper projects across the range states.

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Foreword from the Editor

Dr Christoph Zöckler · Coordinator SBS TF · May 2019

This is the 20th SBS newsletter, the 15th anniversary of the International Recovery Team in Edinburgh and the 20th anniversary of our first expedition to the breeding grounds is fast approaching. SBS in China is celebrating 10 years of field work at the Jiangsu coast! All these are good reasons to celebrate and we have started a new series of old pictures from the archive to commemorate the early years. We invite all readers to contribute with photos from the early days if they have. But I think we have many more reasons to celebrate, such as the recent conservation successes in China and Myanmar.

China has not only nominated one of the most important stop over site, Tiaozini, as a World Heritage site but is also taking on the full challenge of SBS conservation in the country and beyond. It has dedicated a new team and resources to the conservation of this and other globally threatened species and you can find more details in this newsletter. China's support is growing and getting stronger every year and China is emerging as a global leader in environmental issues and conservation. Our SBS Task Force is very proud to work closely with several Chinese agencies, scientists and NGOs alike.

There is also major progress in Myanmar to celebrate. The Ramsar site in the Gulf of Mottama is to be extended and Nan Thar Island has been included in the Flyway Network Sites of the EAAF. Coastal wetland protection is at the heart of the Myanmar government policy and with the help of many donors we recently advanced on this issue quite considerably. But not all is good news. From our winter surveys results we noticed a continuing decline of the species and we still have a lot of tasks ahead of us.

You will also notice when you read this issue that the small and insignificant German harbour town of Bremen (which also happens to be my hometown!) is not so insignificant in terms of Spoon-



billed Sandpiper conservation. You can read that Bremen already made the headlines for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper almost 200 years ago, when the Bremen Ornithologist Gustav Hartlaub published the very first records from the Bay of Bengal in the Journal for Ornithology. It was also a fantastic coincidence when I learned of the 200 years anniversary of the famous Bremen Town Musician fairy tale during my recent visit to the city, just at the same time when we, together with the Russian Artist E. Koblik, designed an animal pyramid of globally threatened waders in accordance with the famous town musicians. And of course last, but not least it is the Bremen based Manfred-Hermsen Stiftung, a foundation of a large coffee holding in the old Hanse town that has been supporting our work right from the beginning. We are all very grateful for their continuing support and the many other organisations who contributed over the years and several more that recently joined in to support the conservation of this charismatic species.

Guest Editorial

Congratulations on the anniversary of the SBS Task Force!

Stefanie Hermsen, Managing Director and Member of the Board, Manfred-Hermsen Stiftung, Bremen

Over the last few years I have been following the growing international community of bird conservationists, dedicated to the conservation of the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper with great appreciation and gratitude! It is impressive for me to observe from a distance how this team is working together in all 14 flyway countries from the breeding grounds in Siberia to East Asian coastal stop over sites and the wintering area in Myanmar, exchanging ideas, developing common strategies and at the same time being individually active at the local level.

I am glad and proud that our foundation has been involved for so many years! When our colleague, Dr. Christoph Zöckler, undertook the first expeditions to suspected wintering areas of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in India, Bangladesh and Myanmar in 2005 - 2008, we were still sceptical as to whether these expenses would be worthwhile for nature conservation and this rare species. But the first sightings of the SBS in Bangladesh and later in larger numbers in Myanmar made us euphoric. A little later small conservation initiatives were developed together with the local population. I would never have predicted that such an interested cross-border community of conservationists would come together and collaborate over the years!

The work of the SBS Task Force is primarily concerned with the conservation of tidal flats, vital not only for the SBS, but also for the survival of millions of other migratory birds. The project has had a major impact on the work of our foundation and contributed to making the protection of coastal wetlands in other parts of the world one of our priorities.

We will continue to support the SBS Task Force and hope that this charismatic bird will retain its last remaining habitats and that the species can be preserved from extinction.



The 12th International EAAFP SBS Task Force meeting in New Century Resort Hotel Hainan, from 3-4 December 2018

Lu Jun, Evgeny Syroechkovskiy and Christoph Zöckler



The Spoon-billed Sandpiper was given special attention and focus with a two-day symposium

China is very honored and proud to have hosted the 12th international Spoon-billed Sandpiper (SBS) Task Force Meeting from 3-4 December 2018 at the New Century Resort Hotel in Hainan. The critical importance of China as main stopover and important wintering area for SBS was increasingly recognised in recent years, both internationally and nationally. With strategic decisions made at the level of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration (NFGA) the Spoon-billed Sandpiper was prioritised in both bilateral cooperation and wider international cooperation schemes. China Universities and NGOs are increasing their activities all together significantly, contributing more and more to the conservation of the species.

The meeting was hosted by the NFGA of China as the leading governmental authority identified to ensure the conservation of SBS and their habitats in the country. A main partner in hosting this larger scale meeting, was the Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora (CAFF) working group of the Arctic Council with one day as part of their Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) Workshop, in which the Spoon-billed Sandpiper featured as one of the key

species. The main aim during the AMBI workshop was to finalise the next 4 years AMBI workplan (2019-23), which would lead to further achievements in conservation of SBS in close cooperation with China, Singapore, Korea, India and Japan.

China is an important observer country of the Arctic Council, which is operating on the level of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and China is contributing to the sustainable development of the Arctic including participating in the conservation of shared migratory bird populations along the flyways. The China National Bird Banding Center organised the Hainan Meeting and as many guests highlighted it created a very warm and friendly atmosphere.

Since 2004 about every two years SBS Task Force members come together somewhere along the flyway to exchange on their activities and discuss a few urgent issues. After our last meeting in Mawlamyine in Myanmar almost two years passed and it was time to exchange on so many activities and progress made. This year the meeting was part of a symposium prior to the AMBI workshop and the Meeting of the EAA flyway partnership later that

week. Over 40 experts from Russia, Japan, Thailand, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Germany, UK, US and mostly from China joined the meeting. Special guests were co-host Tom Barry, chief executive of CAFF in Iceland, Lily Sun, chair of the board from the Mangrove Conservation Fund and Rodney Russ, a long term supporter of our conservation work from Heritage Expeditions and now Strannik Expeditions from New Zealand.

The two days of meetings provided a good opportunity to update everybody on the progress from almost all flyway countries. From China many long standing partners and members of SBS TF were able to join. These included the NBBC, NGO “SBS in China”, Nanjing Nanjing Normal University as well as our new collaborators from Beijing Forestry University and the Mangrove Conservation Fund and all had an opportunity to introduce their work and the plans for the years ahead.

Foreign SBS conservationists had stated during the Hainan meeting that China on its governmental and NGO capacity has achieved the almost impossible. Its full dedication to protecting the SBS has made huge strides and the ambitious plans of our new partners are promising to advance the conservation of this and many other coastal species in this key country for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

Great achievements were also reported from Myanmar and Bangladesh on both, the development of protected areas and the mitigation of hunting. The development of conservation oriented genetic research of SBS lead by Professor Fyodor Kondrashev from Vienna Genetic Laboratory (Austria) in cooperation with BirdsRussia was presented during our meeting by Prof Kondrashev. This work will create the basis for future conservation work and the need to ensure the genetic diversity of future populations, especially those from the Head-starting programme.

The biggest threat to SBS had been so far the reclamation of Tiaozini sandflats in Jiangsu but at present the development has stopped and the site has been nominated as World Heritage. The very thorough assessment process of the WH status by UNESCO usually takes some time, but it is surely the best opportunity to save the unique and critically important intertidal ecosystems, serving SBS as flagship species and other birds but also local people’s traditional lifestyles and sustainable future. Illegal hunting mitigation had made huge progress in China led by NFGA with support from local government and people. These and many other reports together with the good news on the progress of the protection status in other flyway countries created hope and an upbeat atmosphere among the Task Force members, all highly enthused to continue their important work at their respective sites.

A full report of the meetings will be placed on the Task Force web site, while many country and regional reports feature already in this newsletter. The location for the next SBS TF meeting was not yet decided but it was discussed that it might happen again in China in 2021.



The audience listens to the welcome speech of Lu Jun

Winter observations at Leizhou Peninsula, South China by SBS TF

Sayam U. Chowdhury, Nga Yee LAI, Jonathan Martinez, Li Feng, Nigel Clark, Elena Lappo, Evgeny Syroechkovskiy and Christoph Zöckler

Previous observations indicated that the Leizhou Peninsular of Guangdong Province in South China supports wintering population of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (see Martinez & Allcock 2016 in SBS News Bulletin 15). To inform policy, identify threats and to better understand the distribution and abundance of wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers at Leizhou Peninsular, waterbird monitoring is crucial. Site visits were conducted between 27 and 30 November 2018 with special focus on Spoon-billed Sandpiper at five sites across Leizhou Peninsular (see map). The Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force in collaboration with The Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society organized the visits.

Fifteen international and local waterbird experts visited the area. Rain and extended lunch breaks hampered the observations, but the results highlighted the importance of the area for wintering Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other Arctic migrants. Waterbirds were mainly counted on mudflats outside nature reserves during low tide except for Dongli high tide roost. Tujiao and Hebei were visited twice since these two sites supported large concentration of shorebirds. Maximum number observed between the two counts for each species is presented here (Table 1).

A total of 12,031 waterbirds of 45 species were

recorded at five sites (Table 1). Minimum 36 Spoon-billed Sandpipers were observed at Tujiao and Hebei including four flagged birds (Yellow 53, TU, KU and Lime M4). Other globally threatened waterbirds such as Chinese Crested Tern (one at Dongli Sandbar), Great Knot (655), Saunders's Gull (155), and near threatened Eurasian Curlew (33), Bar-tailed Godwit (6), Red Knot (600) and Red-necked Stint (90) were also recorded during the observations.

Maximum number of waterbird observed was at Tujiao (6,761) and Hebei (4,144), as well as all Spoon-billed Sandpipers. These observations suggest that Tujiao and Hebei should be priority sites for long-term conservation interventions at Leizhou Peninsular.

Acknowledgements: We would like to thank the International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) for funding HKBWS and Zhanjiang Bird Watching Society's shorebird conservation work at Leizhou Peninsular, which partly supported this work. We are grateful to Dai Hung, Jing Li, Karin Eberhardt, Katherine Leung, Lars Lachmann, Li Feng, Lily Sun and Yuri Gerasimov for participating and sharing their observations. We would like to thank Natalia Ezerova for preparing the map. We are also thankful to Vivian Fu for her suggestions while planning the observations and reviewing this article.

Table 1: Waterbirds counted at Leizhou Peninsular on 28-30 November 2018

Site Names Date	Donghaidao 28 Nov	Mumian 29 Nov	Tujiao 29-30 Nov	Hebei 29-30 Nov	Dongli 30 Nov	Total
Chinese Pond Heron	6		50	5		61
Grey Heron	2		4		present	6
Little Egret	21		70	120	present	211
Intermediate Egret			200			200
Great Egret	31		620	230	present	881
Garganey			1			1
Northern Pintail			20			20

Black-crowned Night Heron			50	4		54
Black-winged Stilt	1					1
Little Ringed Plover			20			20
Ruff				1		1
Pacific Golden Plover				4		4
Grey Plover	31	35	440	150	present	656
Kentish Plover	50	90	500	500	present	1140
Lesser Sand Plover	20		22	10	present	52
Greater Sand Plover		5		5		10
Bar-tailed Godwit NT			1		5	6
Eurasian Curlew NT		5	22	6		33
Common Redshank	26	3	8	1	1	39
Marsh Sandpiper	17	2	72	120	5	216
Common Greenshank	11	32	130	80	10	263
Spotted Redshank			1	1		2
Terek Sandpiper	2	2			1	5
Great Knot EN			50	5	600	655
Red Knot NT			560	40		600
Red-necked Stint NT			80	10		90
Temminck's Stint			10			10
Dunlin	50	300	2700	2700	present	5750
Spoon-billed Sandpiper CR			36	1		37
Broad-billed Sandpiper		6	1			7
Long-toed Stint			20			20
Common Sandpiper	2					2
Whimbrel	1					1
Ruddy Turnstone					1	1
Brown-headed Gull			1	1	1	3
Black-headed Gull	350		250	80	present	680
Whiskered Tern			650			650
Gull-billed Tern			2		present	2
Saunders's Gull VU	5		100	50	present	155
Relict Gull					1?	0
Caspian Tern		20	70	20	present	110
Sandwich Tern					3	3
Chinese Crested Tern CR					1	1
Great Crested Tern					5	5
White-winged Tern					1?	0
Total Number	626	500	6,761	4,144	633	12,031
Total Species	17	11	32	24	11	45

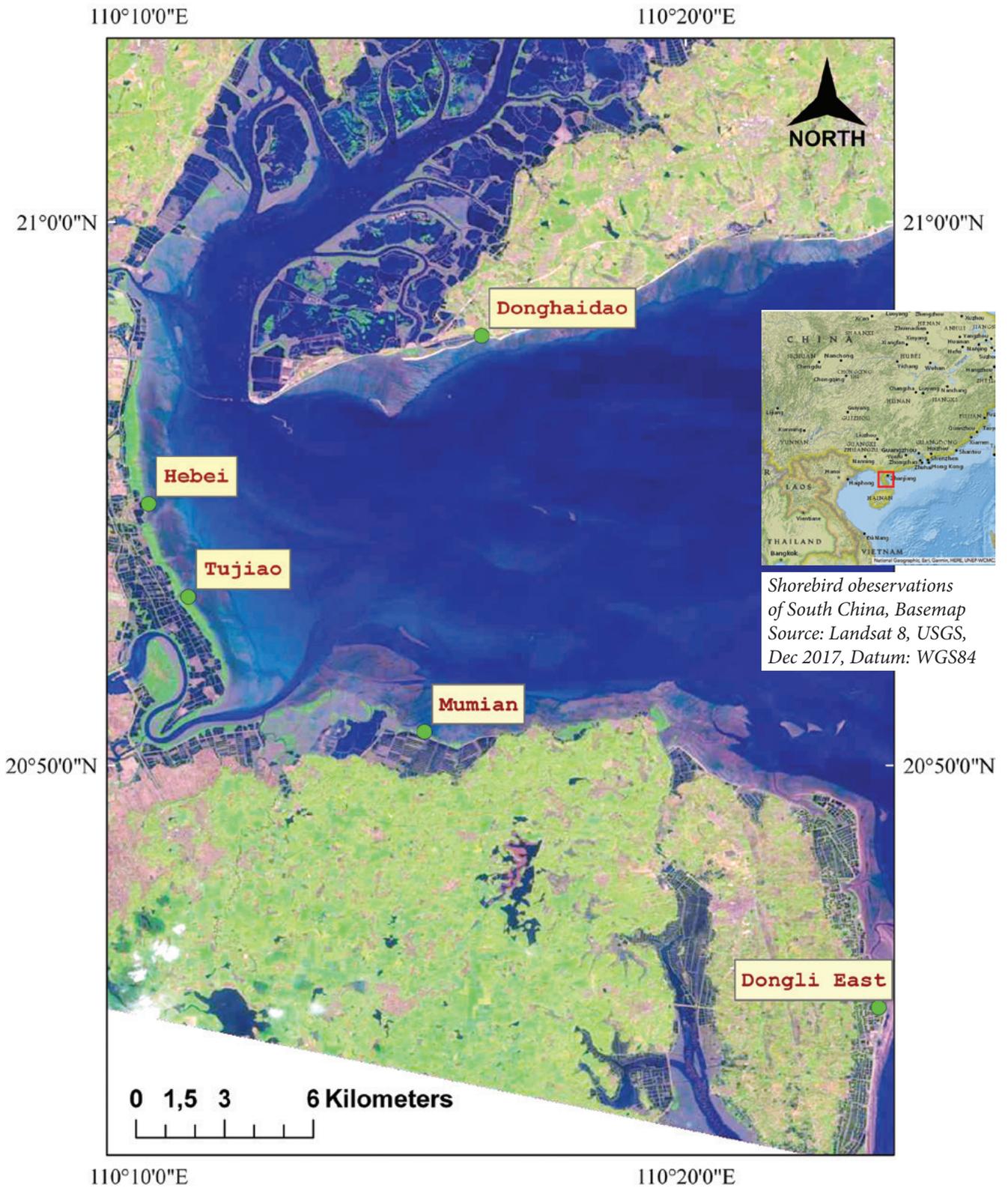


both Zhixiong Sun



A Rainy day but still a good number of waders including a flagged Dunlin from Kamchatka!

Elena Lappo



● Survey places

China establishes the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper Protection Alliance

East Asia-Australasia Flyway's Critically Endangered Waterbird and Coastal Wetland Conservation Forum and the Launch of "Saving the SBS project" was held in Yancheng, Jiangsu

Yifei Jia

On April 20, the Yancheng Yellow Sea Wetland Application Office of the World Natural Heritage Leading Group (hereinafter referred to as the "Application for the World Heritage Office"), the Centre for EAAF Studies, Beijing Forestry University (CEAAF), the Mangrove Conservation Foundation (MCF) and other sponsors, the Jiangsu Yancheng Wetland and Rare Bird Reserve and other institutions met in Yancheng, Jiangsu to take part in the "East Asia-Australasia Flyway's Critically Endangered Waterbirds and Coastal Wetland Protection Forum (hereinafter referred to as the Forum)" and to launch the 'Saving SBS Project'. Nearly 100 representatives from UN, NGOs, SBS-TF, protected area related personnel, universities and research institutes attended the Forum.

Escorting the Life on the Flyway

In recent years, due to large-scale land reclamation, predatory fishery production, unsustainable aquaculture, invasion of alien species, and water pollution, China's coastal wetlands are facing an unprecedented and serious threat. In the past half century, China's temperate coastal wetlands

declined by 53% and mangroves have disappeared by 73%. As the main indicator of coastal ecosystems, the number of migratory waterbirds in the East Asia-Australasian flyway area is decreasing at a rate of 5-9% per year, becoming the most threatened flyway at a global scale. Thus China Coastal Wetland Protection has become the focus of global attention. In response to the urgent needs and key issues in waterbird protection at the flyway scale, the Forum came into being.

This Forum explores methods and strategies of migratory waterbird protection in detail. Through understanding of the protection of East Asia-Australian waterbirds and the study of its habitats and how to restore them, the Forum is fully dedicated to waterbird and habitat protection. Participants draw up a long-term plan and develop a list of priority actions for the East Asia-Australasian flyway and coastal wetland protection.

At the same time, in order to enhance the monitoring capability of protection activities and strengthen the protection SBS and all other wad-



Participants of the Yancheng meeting



Prof. Lei Guangchun introducing the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Protection Alliance

ers, this forum also set up a waterbirds survey training for SBS, and improved the investigation skill of representatives through training from “theoretical + case + practical operation” levels.

Advance Coastal Wetlands to become the World’s Natural Heritage

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper, the Red-crowned Crane and the Reed Parrotbill are just a few charismatic flagship species representing key coastal habitats with up to 400 bird species. The Yancheng Yellow Sea Wetland is a rare wetland resource in the world: It is not only the largest coastal wetland on the west coast of the Pacific Ocean and the Asian continent, but also the largest continuous distribution of muddy intertidal wetlands in the Yellow Sea ecological region. In addition, it also has a unique radiant sand ridge group.

At present, there are more than 50 world heritage sites in China, but coastal wetland heritage sites are still missing. In April 2018, the State Council officially agreed to propose the Yancheng Yellow Sea Wetland as a national project for the World



Dr Evgeny Syroechkovskiy presenting the SBS Task Force flyway conservation programme

Natural Heritage. As the first application of a coastal wetland in China, the Yellow Sea Wetland is of significant importance as a demonstration site for the entire Chinese coastal region.

At the forum, Wu Qijiang, Director of Application for the World Heritage Office and Ms. Sun Lili, Honorary board member of MCF signed the “Framework Agreement on the Protection and Development Cooperation of Yancheng Coastal Wetland”, officially establishing cooperation between the two sides in the fields of wetland restoration and endangered bird protection. In his speech, Wu Qijiang, stressed the importance of this forum for the work of the application: “The application of the Yellow Sea Wetland has entered the final stage. Promoting the cooperation of professional research institutes, professional environmental protection agencies and related departments, it is not only beneficial for the protection of critically endangered waterbirds, but also an important milestone in our nomination of the site for World Heritage status.”

Asia's First Spoon-billed Sandpiper Protection Alliance is established

Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* is one of the flagship species of East Asian-Australasian flyway, especially of its coastal wetlands. It is one of the most endangered and rarest birds on the planet. In 2008, the IUCN Red List of the World Conservation Union raised its current status of protection from endangered (EN) to the highest level of endangerment – critically endangered (CR).

Spoon-billed Sandpipers are threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation, global climate change, and illegal hunting. To further strengthen its protection, at the end of 2018, MCF and CEAAF jointly launched the “Saving the SBS” project. In 2019, in order to promote communication and united protection, this forum advocated the establishment of the “SBS Protection Alliance”, which was supported by Yellow sea and the Bohai Sea World Heritage Application Center, Jiangsu Yancheng Wetland and Rare bird National Nature Reserve, National bird banding center, Society of

Entrepreneurs & Ecology (SEE), and Hong Kong Bird Watching Society and many other government departments, research institutes, and NGOs. The alliance is keen to collaborate fully with the SBS TF and was very glad that the Chairman of SBS TF Dr. Evgeny Syroechkovskiy could join and was present at the meeting. Professor Lei Guangchun, dean of the Nature Reserve College of Beijing Forestry University and Chairman of MCF, introduced: “The Spoon-billed Sandpiper Protection Alliance aims to promote the communication between wetland authorities along the flyway, wetland protected areas, wetland parks, birding societies and all the local governments, NGOs, enterprises and individuals who care about Spoon-billed Sandpiper. It also aims to promote international cooperation.”

It is reported that after the establishment of the alliance, a platform for information communication, experience exchanges, project cooperation, personnel training, and capacity building will be established – so as to raise awareness and promote public participation.



Participants in front of the conference center in Yancheng

Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China – a review of 2018

Jing Li

Last year was by no means ordinary for Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China (SBS in China). It is the 10th year the non-profit organisation conducted waterbird observations in South Jiangsu. This year is also extraordinary since the Chinese government has taken some promising steps to safeguard the critical yet fragile coastal habitats for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper as well as millions of other migratory shorebirds, suggesting that the organisation's ten years of hard work may have finally paid off.

In 2018, SBS in China has expanded its team and includes now several employees from various backgrounds. The team has been sustaining and expanding its efforts to conduct fieldwork and organise outreach activities; they also thought outside the box and raised some conservation funds through cross-disciplinary collaborations.

In 2018, SBS in China has collected a record-breaking number of flag resightings from a growing number of citizen photographers. In autumn alone, they received 57 flag resightings of 30 different Spoon-billed Sandpipers. Some highlights include young individuals first recorded outside their release area (e.g. white 3V), individuals which had been recorded repeatedly in the

same general area (e.g. Lime 29), as well as some much sought-after individuals such as XF49131. The team also increased the spatial and temporal scope of their fieldwork, conducting two rounds of over-summering surveys in June and included Lian Yun Gang into their monthly survey.

Outreach activity has long been the organisation's focus. 2018 was the 3rd year that SBS in China has collaborated with the multinational company Henkel to run conservation programs. Together with corporate volunteers and local communities, they discussed potential ways to introduce shorebird-friendly aquaculture at the Yellow Sea coast and created a massive mud-drawing of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper to show their care and concern for the critically endangered shorebird.

Furthermore SBS in China organised an art competition at two primary schools situated right next to the important shorebird habitats. The theme for the competition was "Sandpipers and Fishermen going hand in hand", meaning that shorebirds and fishermen rely on the very same mudflats for survival and livelihood.

The organisation's collaboration with schools does not end here. In summer 2018, a group of art



Yellow 52 Tiaozini mudflats, September 2017

Jun Cao



With the aim of conserving the mudflats for both migratory shorebirds and the local fishermen, they brainstormed potential ways to introduce environmentally and socially responsible aquaculture into Rudong, Jiangsu.



Exhibition of students' artwork at busy business space in the heart of Shanghai

Cheng Chen



Come here spoonies! We will conserve the critical habitat for you and your fellow shorebirds!

teachers from 11 primary and secondary schools in Rudong gathered for a 3-day workshop. They shared ideas on how to effectively integrate shorebird education into everyday art curriculum, and brainstormed ways to attract more people to visit Rudong, an area critical for shorebirds and boasts incredible food, rich history and immense culture.

The organisation has been successful with crowd-



funding with a young illustrator, a toy company as well as the biggest conservation volunteer coordination platform in China.

It is halfway through 2019 and already a lot more has happened with Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China. However much is going on, saving Spoon-billed Sandpiper and their Yellow Sea habitats remains the ultimate goal of Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China. Let's hope for great news on the 43rd session of the World Heritage Committee.

We would like to thank Henkel Foundation, the Manfred-Hermesen Foundation and NABU for their financial support.

In memory of Lew Young – a tribute from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

Christoph Zöckler

We are deeply saddened and shocked by the sudden loss of Lew Young and we feel very sorry for Lew's family and his close friends. In his capacity as chief executive of the EAAFP he was overseeing our Task Force, providing guidance, support and encouragement to the SBS TF – one of the cornerstone projects within the EAAFP. Even though he was only a year in his new job, he made a lot of good friends within our Task Force and gave support where needed. He wrote an encouraging and supportive guest foreword in our last newsletter No. 19 and he was also instrumental in creating closer links with our partners in Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

But his support for our conservation goals and the conservation of wetlands, especially in Asia had been already for much longer. Lew was giving support in our campaign to stop the Deep Sea Port development on Sonadia Island in Bangladesh and also actively participated in our workshop on the protection of the Gulf of Mottama as early as 2012 in his capacity as Asian Ramsar focal point. Lew also helped us creating several Flyway Network Sites for shorebirds.

We were just discussing further new and exciting avenues of collaboration with Lew, including the strengthening of our early developing relationship with our new partners in the DPR Korea and also explored the possibility of the next EAAFP meeting being hosted by Russia in Siberia, when, far too early and very suddenly, all this came to a halt through the sudden loss of Lew.

We lost a great conservationist and friend.



Eugene Cheah

On behalf of the
Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force:

Dr Christoph Zöckler
(SBS TASK FORCE Coordinator)

Dr Evgeny Syroechkovskiy
(SBS TF Chair)

Sayam Chowdhury
(SBS TF Assistant Coordinator)

In Memoriam Maxim Morozov

Elena Lappo and Evgeny Syroechkovskiy

Dear friends and colleagues, we are very sad to inform you, that our beloved friend Maxim Morozov had passed away on 2 March 2019. He was fighting hard illness till last days, as he always was, and this was, probably, the only one battle which he had lost in his life.

Maxim was always positive, helpful, kind to people. He was a very good friend, careful father and loving husband. He left his friends and family much earlier than anybody could imagine.

He studied glaciology at Moscow State University, later running his own business, but all his life he was a real geographer, conservation oriented, very enthusiastic in travelling and discovering new places.

He had supported and attended several expeditions on SBS survey in wintering and breeding grounds: in India (2005), Myanmar (2008), Vietnam (2009), Kamchatka (2008) and Chukotka (2008), also with Heritage Expedition (2016), and had made his input in studies and protection of SBS.

If you have (or know if anybody has) by chance any of his photos from our joint expeditions, please, send it to us – we are planning to make an album in his memory and for his family, so his daughters can be proud of their father travelling around the world and doing good things.



Maxim on the left together with Evgeny Syroechkovskiy in Vietnam 2009

Minoru Kashiwagi

Joint step taken by both Bengals on shorebird conservation & research

Sayam U. Chowdhury

A newly formed non-profit organization named Birdwatchers Society of West Bengal organized a workshop on coastal waterbird survey and mapping methods that was held on 5 and 6 January 2019. The Birdwatchers' Society's objective is to propagate interest in birdwatching through a method which can help in learning about birds and in its conservation, also to map the birds of West Bengal and understand the current state of birds and its habitats in West Bengal. This is exactly 14 years after the first winter expedition under the lead of Christoph Zöckler surveyed these coastal areas.

Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force Assistant

Coordinator Sayam U. Chowdhury and Arpit Deomurari of WWF India ran the workshop. The two-day workshop involved a series of lectures and a field visit to Frasergunj, South 24 Parganas. A total of 50 participants from West Bengal and Bombay Natural History Society were provided hands-on training on Coastal Waterbird Survey Methods.

Mohammad Foysal and Nazim Uddin Khan Prince of the Bangladesh Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation Project delivered lectures in the field, as did experts from West Bengal including Sujan Chatterjee, Kanad Baidya, Santanu Manna and others.



Survey team at Frasergunj

SBS TF

The main objectives of the workshop were to inspire and train young ornithologists of West Bengal and to carry out waterbird surveys along the entire east coast of India with special focus on finding the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

After the workshop, members of the Birdwatchers' Society and Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

jointly organized a survey in Frasergunj especially around Jambu Dweep. Although the team did not find any Spoon-billed Sandpipers, they observed approximately 2000 waterbirds of 25 species including 320 globally endangered Great Knots. The team also recorded the globally near-threatened Eurasian Curlew, Curlew Sandpiper, Bar-tailed Godwit, Black-tailed Godwit, Painted Stork and Red Knot during the survey.



Sommouli Sarkar



Sommouli Sarkar



Sujan Chatterjee

Surveying SBS on the wintering grounds in the Gulf of Mottama

Pyae Phyo Aung, Sayam Chowdhury, Chris Kelly and Christoph Zöckler



For the 12th year a survey of Spoon-billed Sandpiper was conducted in the Gulf of Mottama. Each year this most important wintering site has been surveyed at different levels. This year again BANCA arranged and coordinated with additional effort another comprehensive survey of the vast mudflat area. An international survey team of over 19 surveyors from Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Germany and the U.K. assembled in the remote coastal mudflats to survey the key wintering areas of the Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other shorebirds. They were accompanied by an experienced team of Myanmar surveyors of BANCA and local fishermen, who joined up for these winter surveys for the tenth year.

A total of 136,383 wetland depended birds of 64 species were recorded in the Gulf of Mottama between 20 January and 1 February 2019. The survey team recorded an estimated 112 critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpipers, based on the SBS proportion in 137 flock counts of over 36,000 birds extrapolated to an estimated 62,000 birds of small waders in the area. Estimating large flocks of small waders is very difficult and the extrapolation hence is varying up and down accordingly. These birds were usually encountered by the team at low tide while foraging across the vast mudflat habitats. A total of at least 14 individually flagged birds were

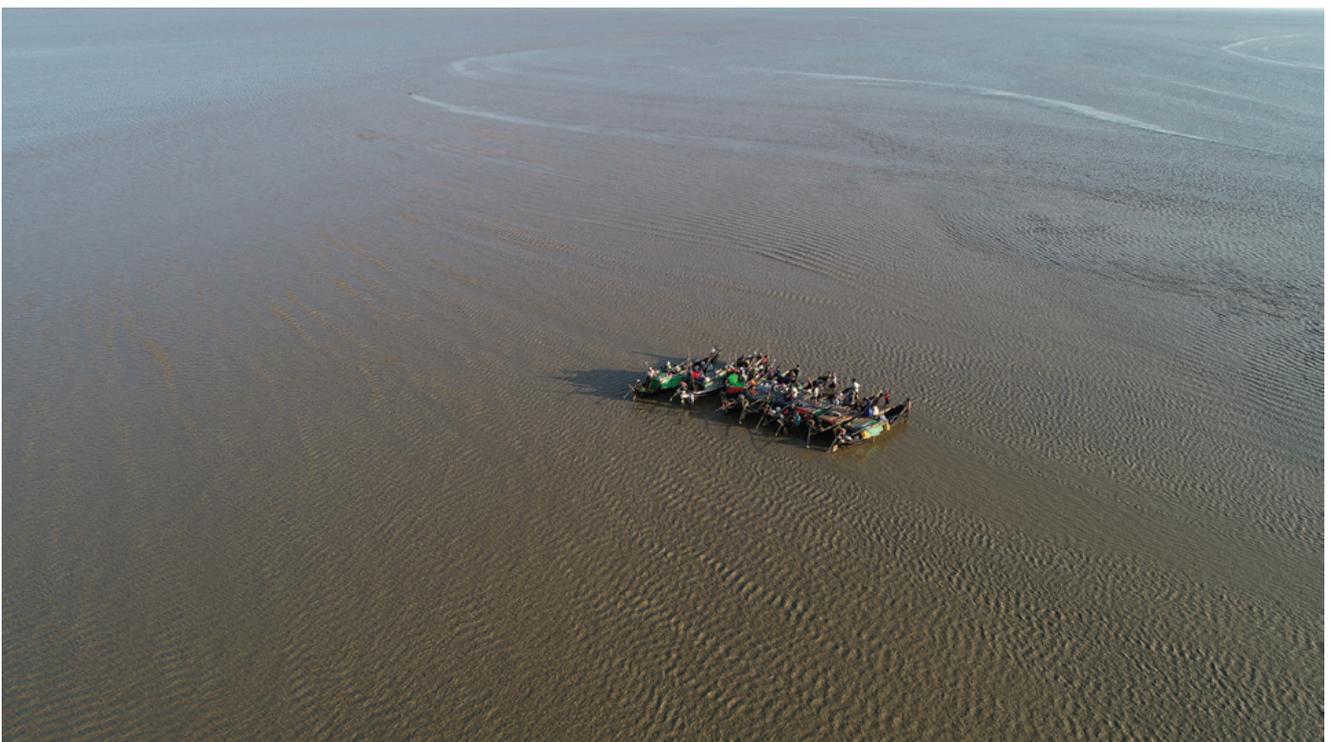
observed. Of these four birds could be identified individually. They include overall at least four head-started birds, as well as birds marked on the breeding grounds and in China. Most interesting and surprising is the record of one bird originating from the North Chukotka coast, an area that has very few birds left breeding there. The relatively high proportion of 18.8% flagged birds could allow us to determine the overall global population size, if we'd know of the total number of remaining flagged birds known at this moment. For this we have to wait for the breeding season and observe the return of marked birds into the breeding population.

Other globally endangered species such as Great Knot (32 individuals) was observed, as well as seven globally near-threatened species such as Black-tailed Godwit (5,625 individuals), Bar-tailed Godwit (21 individuals), Eurasian Curlew (597 individuals), Red-necked Stint (6,157 individuals – 50% of Little & Red-necked Stint), Curlew Sandpiper (3,003 individuals) and Black-headed Ibis (51 individuals). The most abundant species were Lesser Sand Plover (16,385), Whiskered Tern (8,088) and Kentish Plover (10,997).

While overall the number of shorebirds of small and large waders appear to have been increasing,

most likely a consequence of the extensive hunting mitigation work, the number of Spoon-billed

Sandpiper is still declining though the rate of decline has decreased considerably.



Camp of survey boats tight together in the vast Gulf of Mottama

all photos by Thwin Maung Maung

Field notes from the Spoon-billed Sandpiper census in Myanmar, 2019

Ding Li Yong, BirdLife International (Asia)

From the notebooks

The Gulf of Mottama in Myanmar is well known to bird conservationists in Asia as the single most important coastline for wintering Spoon-billed Sandpiper (Zöckler et al. 2010a; Zöckler et al. 2016; Aung 2018; Aung et al. 2018). After having read much about the Gulf in various reports and papers by colleagues in the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force team, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, universities and elsewhere, it seemed about time I made a field visit to the site to join leading Asian shorebird experts and colleagues from the SBSTF for some field action. So, it came as a pleasant surprise to have received an invitation from Pyae Phyo 'Phy-olay' Aung of the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA) to visit the Gulf and join the (Jan-Feb) mid-winter surveys late last year!

Our multi-national team joined the Gulf of Mottama surveys in January 2019, following a previous round of survey that was completed in late December 2018. Christoph and Sayam arrived in Yangon after having completed yet another bout of shorebird fieldwork elsewhere in the region, as is Suchart Daengphayon (better known to us as Mr. Tee) and Pannachet Kijja from the Bird Conservation Society of Thailand, and Chris Kelly, retired but still an ardent shorebird watcher. Chairunas 'Nchay' Adha Putra, leading shorebird expert in Indonesia, Vivian Fu from the EAAFP and myself were all first timers to the Gulf (but not to wading in mud!). Then there was Gideon Dun and Saw Moses, both highly experienced field ornithologists and old friends that I have not caught up with for a long time. Not to be forgotten of course are our dedicated colleagues from BANCA who had skilfully assembled the team and sorted out the complex logistics of moving



Members of the field team counting shorebirds in a hurry at rising tide 21 January 2019 ...

Thwin Maung Maung

people, supplies and equipment to the field, as well coordinate the work of a special filming team armed with a drone to document the field survey.

Now well known to the coastal conservation community in Myanmar, the rather unimposing village of Ko De Zu on the eastern banks of a major tidal channel off the Sittaung was a natural choice to plan and kick-start the week-long survey. BANCA has worked at Ko De Zu for many years now and has managed to establish a strong degree of rapport with the villagers here, besides being instrumental in setting up a strong Local Conservation Group with the involvement of many village leaders (Zöckler et al. 2010a; Zöckler et al. 2010b). In fact, many of the boatmen/fishermen who were involved with our survey work are from Ko De Zu, and many of them are all too familiar with the conservation story of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper.

The field surveys took place over the week of 21-25 January and covered a large stretch of the tidal channel downstream from Ko De Zu. Due to the large area to be covered, Phyolay arranged for the expedition flotilla (now consisting of 12 boats and more than 36 people) to be split into two: one deployed to the West of the Gulf in the Yangon region. The rest of us then surveyed the East. Daily, the group was further split into survey teams consisting 2-3 people each; these teams then covered a different 'quadrant' of the tidal flats adjacent to where the boats are moored. Because the tides started receding in the morning, teams could work from around 7 am to about 3 pm, just before the tidal bore swept up the Gulf.

The number of shorebirds the team found were enormous, and we certainly bore witness to easily the largest congregations of waders in Southeast Asia (e.g. Zöckler et al. 2014; Aung et al. 2018). Evening surveys (on boat) captured many tens of



... scanning a flock of 6000 small waders for SBS before flying off

Thwin Maung Maung

thousands of shorebirds congregating and flying back to high tide roosts still unknown to us. Particularly impressive were the large flocks of *Chlidonia* terns, Eurasian Curlews and Bar-tailed Godwits (easily in the many thousands) and vast numbers of calidrids – notably Rufous/Little Stint, Curlew and Broad-billed Sandpiper (a species increasingly rarer further south in Southeast Asia). In total, we counted up to 53 Spoon-billed Sandpipers after five days' of survey effort on both sides of the Gulf – a worrying low number considering far higher counts in past years. Hopefully this lower than usual count does not reflect a decline, and that birds were present elsewhere in the gulf – possibly where new sandy mudflats have emerged as a result of the dynamic fluvial forces at work.

Some reflections

The opportunity to finally visit the Gulf and work closely with our colleagues in the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force and BANCA was humbling, yet an enormously inspiring experience. Besides being able to obtain a close-up look at the work and action on the ground, there was also a great deal of new and exciting ideas going around the field team on how we could expand and strengthen the work of the task force in Southeast Asia (e.g. Indonesia, Vietnam), as well as identifying future areas of priorities for us to dedicate our energies to.

A highlight for me (and possibly many of my team-mates) was the opportunity to interact with our colleagues in the local conservation group in Ko De Zu. The commitment and dedication shown by the community members in Ko De Zu was demonstrated in their strong engagement throughout the field survey, from the planning of survey logistics, to actually investing time and resource into field work. Additionally, I found it impressive and inspiring to recall that it was not that many years ago that hunting of shorebirds by local people was an immediate threat to the shore-

bird populations in this part of Myanmar (Zöckler et al. 2010b). In many developing parts of Asia, securing local involvement is always critical to the success of a conservation project, and probably forms the most challenging part of the work. Our experiences in the Gulf was testimony to the enormous amounts of work and energy dedicated by the BANCA team to building trust and rapport with local people, and over time, getting local people to appreciate, understand, and endorse the conservation work integral to the priorities of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force and the Bird-Life Partnership in Southeast Asia.

I left Yangon, more aware than ever before of the precarious situation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper (after having seen them again, nearly 10 years since my last sighting!), the challenges faced by the field workers on the ground, and re-charged by the enthusiasm shared by all our colleagues. I also take home a renewed sense of urgency in strengthening the work of the Task Force in the coming years, especially in working closely with our colleagues to secure resources for priority actions ranging from anything from regular monitoring to head-starting of the Spoon-billed Sandpipers in Russia. Last but not least, I am extremely grateful to the BANCA team, particularly Phyolay, as well as Sayam and Christoph from having invited me to join in the work in the Gulf!

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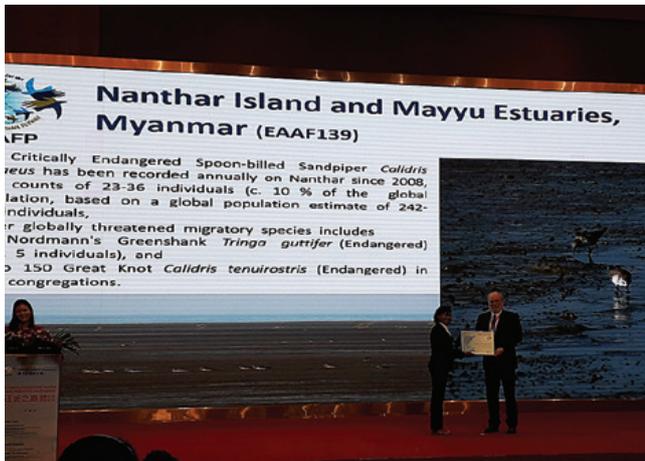
The Gulf of Mottama – the large coastal wilderness

Christoph Zöckler

Important step for the protection of Nan Thar Island, Rakhine State

Ren Naung Soe and Pyae Phyo Aung

The Union of Myanmar designated five EFN sites from 2015-2018 including three important wintering sites for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Besides Nanthar Island and Mayyu Estuary (EAAF 139) another important site for Spoon-billed Sandpiper Meinmahla Kyun and the Outer Islands have been listed as Flyway Network Site (FNS) and officially endorsed by EEAFF during a ceremony at the last meeting in Hainan, China (see photo).



Daw Thin Thin Yu of the Forest Department representing the Myanmar delegation receives the FNS certificates for Nan Thar from EEAFF chair Pete Probasco at the opening ceremony

Nanthar Island is located on the coast of Rakhine (formerly Arakan) State in western Myanmar, not far from the state capital, Sittwe city, and the international border with Bangladesh.

Nan Thar Island is second most important wintering site of Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Myanmar, hosting regularly 20 or more birds. For the fifth winter 'Lime Green 27' ringed on the breeding grounds and for the forth winter running 'Yellow CU' from Tiaozini in China are faithfully returning to Nan Thar Island.

The long-term local partner (former name Sittwe Nature Conservation Association SNCA) is dedicated for conservation efforts of Spoon-billed

Sandpiper since 2009. The local team is monitoring shorebirds every month and is addressing issues such as bird hunting and turtle egg collecting to reduce hunting pressure from local community. With the technical supports of BANCA, the team organised education and awareness activities, assessment of local communities' livelihood and provided hand-water pumps for community. In order to conserve natural resources of Nan Thar Island, the team organized and formed local



Site visits with parliament member, forest department and fishery department of Rakhine State

conservation group volunteering participation of university students and villagers.

With the supports of local and union governments, Nan Thar Island was designated as Flyway Network Site in 2018. For the long-term conservation of Nan Thar Island, commitment from local communities, government and international conservation organizations are essential. With the long-term vision of Union Government of Myanmar for wise use of wetlands and promote sustainable development for local community is one of the opportunities to designate Nan Thar Island as Ramsar Site in near future.

We would like to thank our donors ArcCona

Consulting, ICFC, RSPB, BirdLife International and the Light House Foundation for supporting

our work and conservation activities in Nan Thar Island over the past 10 years!



Flyway network site information signboard at Nan Thar Island



Ren Naung Soe surveying SBS in company of local forest officer U Aung San, March 2019



SBS Lime Green 27 and Yellow CU, Nan Thar Island, February 2019



both Ren Naung Soe

From the early days



First chicks are hatching in Rekokavrer, Kolyuchin Bay, July 2002. From left to right: Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, Elena Lappo, Chris Kelly, Reindeer Herder and local guide Oleg, Nikolay, the Vesdikhod Driver and James McCallum painting



123 years earlier Kolyuchin Bay was the place where the vessel Vega was stuck frozen for 264 days. "In 1879 the spoonbill sandpiper was encountered by members of the Vega expedition near Kolyuchin Bay in such large numbers that they found their way to the officer's table on many occasions, according to A.E. Nordenskjold (1881, p. 48). This earned them severe reproaches on the return of the expedition." (Portenko, Birds of the Chukchi Peninsula and Wrangel Island, New Delhi 1981). The picture shows Nordenskjold at Kolyuchin Bay on a painting by Georg von Rosen

The first ever records of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper and the first painting of a bird in breeding plumage

Joachim Seitz

The charismatic sandpiper was already known to the famous Swedish naturalist Linnaeus from a specimen in the Uppsala Museum of unknown origin, erroneously claimed from Surinam. He published this record under the name *Platalea pygmaea* in the 10th volume of his famous book “systema naturae” (p. 140) in 1758.

It took nearly 80 years before the next records of this bird emerged. At the Museum of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta in 1836 Mr. Newcombe presented a specimen he obtained from the coast of the Rakhine state in north-western Myanmar [Nan Thar? The ed.]. In the following 23 years the existence of 21 further specimens was published by the Bremen ornithologist Gustav Hartlaub in the German “Journal für Ornithologie” 1859 (p. 325-329) and later by James Edmund Harting in “The Ibis” 1869 (p. 426-434). All the birds were encountered and obtained from a region between

the mouth of the Ganges river in India and the Rakhine State in the Bay of Bengal, most of these near Chittagong (Bangladesh). All were in winter plumage. The habitat was correctly described as tidal mudflats at river mouths.

Only in 1859 the first record of a bird in breeding plumage was published in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London (p. 201). This bird was obtained from the Bering Straits by an expedition under Capt. Moore and was given to the Oxford Museum. Of this bird a beautiful hand coloured plate drawn by famous bird painter John Gerrard Keulemans was added to Harting’s article in the Ibis (Harting 1869). It took again another 20 years until the Swedish expedition lead by Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld discovered the Spoon-billed Sandpiper on the breeding grounds in 1878, when they got stuck in the ice.



John Gerrard Keulemans’ drawing from 1859

SBS in Arts

The Bremen Town Musicians and the Spoon-billed Sandpiper

Christoph Zöckler

When asked: “Where are you from?” in Eastern Siberia during my first expeditions to the Russian Arctic and I replied from Bremen I was astonished to hear the reply: ‘Ah! Bremenski musikanty!’ This was the reply anywhere in Russia regardless whether in Moscow or the regional capital Yakutsk or completely remote towns or villages in the Yana or Indigirka floodplain. I realised that this popular Grimm’s fairy-tale has made it well beyond the town gates of Bremen and became one of the best known trademarks of my home town internationally.

Now, Bremen has also played a significant role in supporting the conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. The SBS Task Force was supported with a small grant already in 2003 by the Bremen based Manfred-Hermsen Foundation (MHS). Our first winter surveys in 2005 and 2006 to India and Bangladesh were funded by MHS and in 2011 the

foundation stepped up and supported the coordination of the Task Force ever since. Yet there is an even older connection of Bremen and the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. The Bremen ornithologist Gustav Hartlaub (1859) was the first to mention the first ever 21 specimen of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper from the Ganges Delta region (see article by Joachim Seitz in this newsletter). Today the Überseemuseum in Bremen, holding a large bird collection, still keeps four specimen of the rare sandpiper, all originating from the 19th century.

This year the Kunsthalle Bremen (Art Museum) is celebrating 200 years Bremen Town Musicians with an especially dedicated exhibition. The Bremen Town Musicians are among the most popular German fairy tale characters. Long before its publication, the fairy tale was passed on orally. With its inclusion in the second edition of the Children’s and Household Tales by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, it was distributed in print for the first time in 1819. In the fairy tale donkey, dog, cat and rooster never arrive in Bremen. Nevertheless, through some detours, they have since become an integral part of Bremen’s identity. In the past 200 years, the Town Musicians have repeatedly given reason for creative interpretation and thus have advanced deeply into a variety of pictorial and



Maurizio Cattelan, *Love Saves Life*, 1995 and *Love Lasts Forever*, 1998, Prepared animals, skeletons, Kunsthalle Bremen – Der Kunstverein in Bremen
Maurizio Cattelan



Maarten Vanden Eynde, *Pinpointing Progress*, 2018, Mixed media
Marcus Meyer



“... something better than extinction you can find anywhere”

Drawing by Evgeny Koblik

symbolic worlds. Their most famous symbol – the animal pyramid – has served as model and spread all the way to the visual arts. Today, the fairy tale of the Bremen Town Musicians is used as a rich parable, to approach a wide variety of issues.

Drawn imagery is just as important for the dissemination of popular fairy tales as the narrative text. For the Town Musicians, the pictorial history of the fairy tale began in England only four years after its first publication. In 1823, the illustrator George Cruikshank summed up the conquest of the robber's house: Spectacularly he staged the animal pyramid and the fleeing robbers. From then onwards, these motifs form the visual climax of the story. In Germany, the fierce topic had to prevail against the more popular fairy tales with, mainly female, suffering characters – Cinderella, Snow White or Little Red Riding Hood.

Today illustrations include all sorts of motifs of which a small selection shown from the exhibition just outside the Bremen Kunsthalle, a present from the twin town Riga and strong Russian connection.

It is pure coincidence that at the end of last year we were designing a pyramid of shorebirds totally unaware of the imminent 200 year anniversary. In addition to the globally critically threatened Spoon-billed Sandpiper there are now three more shorebirds on the East Asian Australasian Flyway listed as globally threatened in the second highest category 'endangered'. This triggered the idea to assemble all of them in a pyramid similar to the town musicians with the Far eastern Curlew at the bottom, followed by Nordmann's Greenshank and Great Knot and finally the most threatened, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper on top.

Of course our long-term supporter, the Russian artist Evgeny Koblik knows all about the Bremen Town Musicians and he was more than happy to

create the pyramid of the shorebirds in a painting and I think he did a splendid job.

As the story goes the donkey says to the other animals: "Come on, let's go to Bremen. Something better than death you can find anywhere." In reference to the globally threatened shorebirds today's motto has been altered to "...something better than extinction you can find anywhere".

Even though well known in Russia, the story of Bremen Town Musicians had not made it much further along the old silk road to China, Myanmar or Bangladesh. Very few have heard about them here. We hope that not only the 'new silk road' will help to spread the story but that it also might boost the conservation of the threatened shorebirds.

Acknowledgements: We like to thank the Kunsthalle Bremen for allowing us to reprint photos of the exhibits.



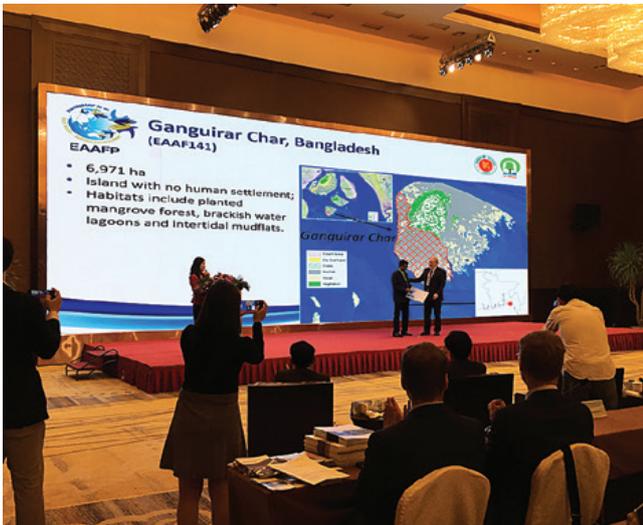
Drawing of the Bremen Town Musicians in the illustrated english edition by George Cruikshank of the Children's and Household Tales, London 1823, Collection Dieter Brand-Kruth

News in Brief

Bangladesh

Ganguirar Char as Bangladesh's 6th Flyway Network Site

Ganguirar Char has been declared as a Flyway Network Site during CoP10 of EAAFP, held in China in December 2018. The mudflat of Ganguirar Char is an important site for wintering migratory birds including Spoon-billed Sandpiper (CR), Nordmann's Greenshank (EN), Great Knot (EN) etc. In 2016, 48 Spoon-billed Sandpiper, 2 Nordmann's Greenshank and 40 Great Knot have been recorded at Ganguirar Char (Chowdhury et al. 2017). We thank Bangladesh Forest Department, especially Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) Mr. Jahidul Kabir for nominating this site. We are also grateful to the EAAFP, Golam Rabbi and Zohoral Mila of Bangladesh Forest Department for their support throughout the process.



A representative from Bangladesh Forest Department receives the Flyway Network Site certificate for Ganguirar Char at EAAFP CoP10, held in China in December 2018

Sayam U. Chowdhury

Vietnam



A total of three SBS in the Mekong Delta 19 Jan 2019

Nguyen Manh Hiep

Japan



Spring record of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper on April 21 at Saga Higashiyoka Higata. A lot of birder saw that. Everyone was very glad. About 10,000 birds are staying now

Hitomi Yatsuki, Saga Japan

More News in Brief

Thailand

Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST) has been working on conservation of migratory shorebirds, particularly the globally threatened Spoon-billed Sandpiper, at Pak Thale in Phetchaburi province for over a decade. The main threat to the survival of these birds are land use change. Migratory shorebirds depend heavily on salt pans as their feeding and high-tide roosting site. The conversion of salt pans to aquaculture ponds, urban area, factories, land mining, etc. is putting the fate of these globally threatened shorebirds at high risk.

BCST sees the importance of securing habitat for these migratory shorebirds and one way to

achieve that is to establish a nature reserve. Because most of the land at Pak Thale are privately owned, BCST has been in negotiation to buy the land which currently covers approximately 8 hectares of salt pans where Spoon-billed Sandpipers and other shorebirds utilise every winter.

Currently, the land acquisition is largely supported by the Rainforest Trust. However, we still need to raise another 1,500,000 THB (47,000 USD) to fully cover all the costs including future management of the site. If successful, this will be Thailand's first nature reserve for migratory shorebirds and managed by a non-governmental organisation.

If you like to donate please visit Rainforest Trust <http://bit.ly/2Ydp21e> to donate by credit card. For more information, please contact via our inbox or ayuwat@bcst.or.th

Goal
Establish Thailand's first nature reserve aimed for securing and restoring habitat for globally threatened shorebirds

Target
We aim to raise at least 1,500,000 THB (47,000 USD) to buy and manage salt pans for shorebirds

Make A Donation
Via Paypal: bcsting@gmail.com
Via International Bank Transfer
Bank name: THB Bank
Bank address: Ngamwongwan branch, Northburi, Thailand
Swift code: THBK2333
Beneficiary name: Bird Conservation Society of Thailand
IBAN Number: 606-2-49477-3

BCST
BirdLife International

RAINFOREST TRUST

For more information
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Pak Thale: Regular and well-visited SBS wintering site in the Gulf of Bangkok

Slimbridge, U.K.

In the last days of May we received the very good news that three chicks from one clutch hatched at the conservation breeding facilities of WWT in Slimbridge U.K.! Fingers crossed for the little creatures and we hope to provide a more complete account on the development in the next issue.



The Last Page



*Russian artist Evgeny Koblik created a new version of the well known **Bremen Town Musicians** from globally threatened waders of the EAA Flyway: Far Eastern Curlew at the bottom, followed by Nordmann's Greenshank and Great Knot and finally the most threatened, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper on top*