

### PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS

#### Chinese Crested Tern *Sterna bernsteini*



An adult Chinese Crested Tern in a mixed-species colony on Wuzhishan Island, August 2009 (© Chen Shuihua).

#### Background

Chinese Crested Tern is an exceptionally poorly-known species, recorded breeding recently at only two sites on the eastern coast of China (in Zhejiang and Fujian Province), and outside the breeding season on Halmahera, Indonesia, in Sarawak, Malaysia, and in Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines. Few chicks are known to have been raised since 2000, and its movements to wintering grounds remain unknown. Given the paucity of records, its population is thought to number fewer than 50 individuals. The coastal wetlands it utilises are under threat from large-scale development projects and pollution from domestic sewage and industrial effluent. However, perhaps the current greatest threat is capture for food and the collection of eggs.

#### Actions being implemented

1. Work is ongoing to **raise awareness** of the importance of conserving breeding islands, among communities, local governments and national government ministries. As a result, protection has been stepped up on the Jiushan Islands, with wardens defending colonies from egg collectors.
2. A **planned workshop** will decide on an appropriate protocol for restoring the tern colony at Xiangshan, and develop a strategy for seabird conservation and education in the area. Participants will include US scientists and Chinese government personnel.



Dr Chen Shuihua gives a talk in Xiangshan County about the situation of species in Zhejiang (© Dan Zhongyong).

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