

The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme

Annual Report



PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS

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Cover Picture: White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* is benefitting from the implementation of conservation action funded by the Species Champion *in focus*, a joint main sponsor of Birdfair (J.C. Eames)



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To find out more about how to become a BirdLife Species Champion or Preventing Extinctions Programme supporter please contact us today:

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Or write to us at: BirdLife Species Champions, BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge, CB3 0NA, United Kingdom

You can keep up with our progress on our website at
www.birdlife.org/extinction



BirdLife International is a partnership of people for birds and the environment. As a worldwide community, we are the leading authority on the status of birds and their habitats. Over 10 million people support the BirdLife Partnership of national nongovernmental conservation organisations and local networks. Partners, operating in more than 100 territories, work together on shared priorities, programmes, and policies, learning from each other to achieve real conservation results. The BirdLife Partnership promotes sustainable living as a means of conserving birds and all other forms of biodiversity.

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As BirdLife International's new Chief Executive I take great pleasure in introducing this first annual report for the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme.

With human impact on the environment growing ever-deeper there is no doubt we are now facing an unprecedented mass extinction event. Today, we categorise some 190 bird species as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, species on the very brink of extinction. And it is clear that threats are still increasing to these and many others throughout the world.

Preventing extinctions is one of the key conservation objectives of the BirdLife global Partnership strategy

In a very worrying global scenario for biodiversity the promising news is that some Critically Endangered bird species are already benefitting from conservation provided by BirdLife International or from other conservation organisations around the world that are committed to their well being.

Particularly for many of the least well-known yet most threatened species the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme really represents a last chance for survival. BirdLife Partners are implementing crucial conservation actions on the ground, either themselves or empowering local conservation groups. Even in those countries and territories where no BirdLife Partner exists today and no other organisations are providing conservation either, we are committed to reach out to the Critically Endangered species found there to start to establish a plan for their protection and recovery. We believe the loss of any should be avoided and we are committed through our work to stop this from happening.

Over the past few years there have been several notable conservation successes in saving bird species from the brink of extinction. With the will and the resources, species can be brought back from the edge of the abyss. And so the BirdLife Global Council decided to create the Preventing Extinctions Programme to coordinate a global attempt to tackle the problem of extinction en masse. With more than 110 Partner organisations in respective countries and territories around the world, we are ideally placed to undertake this challenge.

The conservation actions we are undertaking that benefit Critically Endangered species almost always benefit the broader biodiversity that frequents the sites and habitats they live in too. Most importantly our work engages with local communities at a grass roots level. In many cases this helps alleviate poverty, by providing alternative incomes for indigenous peoples many of whom have a much greater and closer dependence on the threatened ecosystems they inhabit than we do in the developed world.

Through its very targeted and practical approach, the BirdLife Preventing Extinction Programme provides hope for a brighter future for these and many other species.

Whether you are reading this as one of BirdLife Partnership's 10 million supporters, as a donor to the programme or even if you are actively involved as a conservation professional I hope you enjoy reviewing the groundbreaking and inspirational work being undertaken in preventing bird extinction.

To the Species Champions I'd like to say thank you for the support that has made the development of this programme possible. This is really a report of results that you have achieved for bird conservation through the work of passionate, dedicated and extremely informed local conservationists. We believe they are best placed to identify the needs, to address the threats and to ensure a cost effective, long-term and sustainable programme of conservation.

Much remains to be done but your support has helped us give these species a chance.




Dr Marco Lambertini
Chief Executive of BirdLife International

The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme

In response to the rapidly increasing threat of bird species extinctions, BirdLife International has launched the ***BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme***.

This important new global conservation programme embraces all four pillars of the BirdLife International Strategy. In addition to protecting and conserving globally threatened species it also delivers site and habitat conservation, as well as engaging with and empowering people, encouraging the development of sustainable livelihoods and helping to improve human quality of life.

The Preventing Extinctions Programme builds on the success several BirdLife Partners have already enjoyed bringing Critically Endangered species back from the brink of extinction. It aims to continue to learn lessons from these successes, offering new conservation opportunities to the entire Partnership.

The heart of the programme is the establishment of two important new communities.

- 1. BirdLife Species Guardians*** are individuals or organisations that are appointed to take on a commitment to implement, coordinate and promote conservation action for a particular Critically Endangered species.
- 2. BirdLife Species Champions*** are companies, organisations or individuals who wish to support BirdLife in its work preventing extinctions.

The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme

The story so far...

It has been an eventful first 18 months for the programme, since it was first launched at the 2007 British Birdwatching Fair, in a fanfare of publicity. The Birdfair became the first Global Programme Sponsor and proceeds from the 2007, 2008 and 2009 have and will go to the programme. Without the tremendously generous support of Birdfair, much of what we are achieving would be impossible.

Since its inception, the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme has already achieved a huge amount of tangible conservation action on the ground. This annual report focuses on the amazing work of a few of our Species Guardians but the Preventing Extinctions Programme is far more wide ranging than just this concept. It encompasses the entirety of work being undertaken by the BirdLife Partnership on threatened species. In 2008 alone, the Partnership's work covered 75 Critically Endangered species not to mention the many other Endangered and Vulnerable species. It is this work, often involving several different Partners that makes this programme truly unique.

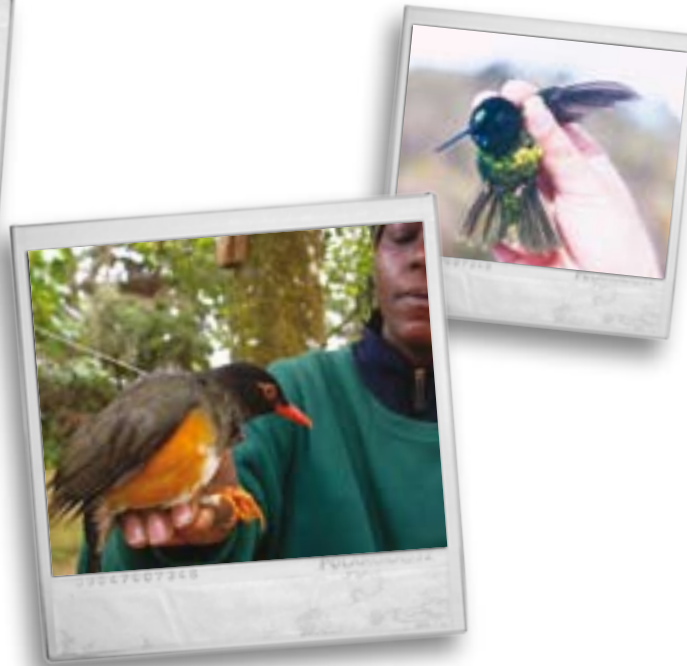


In a collaboration of rigorous science, practical conservation, innovative fundraising and wide-ranging communication, the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme is aiming to deliver something ground-breaking. As a global conservation partnership and the world's leading authority on birds and their habitats. With Partners in over 100 countries and territories, we are working across borders and without politics. Our structure, and 10 million supporters worldwide, put us in a position to really make a difference.

Our work on albatrosses and the threat posed to them by longline fisheries has resulted in some significant successes. Through our scientific and advocacy work in implementing mitigation measures on longline boats a recent survey found that for every 100 albatrosses being killed in fisheries in South African waters in 2006, 85 are now being saved thanks to the efforts of the Albatross Task Force working with the government and the fishing industry.

In India, after significant advocacy work from BirdLife Partners, the use of the veterinary drug, diclofenac has now been banned because of the catastrophic effects it has had on vulture populations across the Indian subcontinent, where one species has declined by more than 99.9%. Now there is recent evidence that this drug is being sold in East Africa and so the BirdLife Partnership is involved in quantifying the threat and advocating against this drug's use before a similar fate befalls Africa's vultures.

A collaboration of Partners and other conservation organisations is currently involved in trying to illuminate the causes of decline of one of nature's true oddities, Spoon-billed Sandpiper, and in preventing its rapid disappearance. From the remote breeding grounds in the Russian far-east, through its migration stop-over sites in the Yellow Sea, to its wintering grounds in South-East Asia. Groups of dedicated individuals, with support from the Preventing Extinctions Programme, are surveying huge areas of wetlands and identifying the multiple threats that this species faces.





In a remote part of Ethiopia, Sidamo Lark has moved to the brink of extinction as a result of habitat change, without almost anybody noticing. Luckily, a team from BirdLife International discovered its predicament before it was too late and the Preventing Extinction Programme is now trying desperately to stop mainland Africa's first avian extinction.

These are examples of scenarios repeated all over the world but the Preventing Extinctions Programme aims to halt these declines and to do what it says: Prevent Extinctions

In May 2008, BirdLife International, on behalf of the IUCN, launched a four-year update on the Red List for birds. More details of this can be found in this report, but this had significant implications as to the number of species requiring urgent action.

In August 2008 we recruited possibly our most recognisable and well-known Species Champion, Sir David Attenborough. Sir David chose the occasion of the British Birdwatching Fair Celebrity lecture to announce that he would be backing work to prevent the extinction of the Critically Endangered Araripe Manakin. Found in north-east Brazil, this species is reliant on forest on a mountain plateau that also provides essential drinking water for several large towns. This is a perfect example of how protecting a species of bird can have measurable benefits to people and livelihoods. In stepping forward as a Species Champion and announcing his support of the Programme, he said 'We have no right to exterminate the species that evolved without us. We have the responsibility to do everything we can to preserve their continued existence.'

The programme was officially launched to the Partnership at BirdLife's World Conservation Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina in September 2008. Hundreds of people attended the meeting from 124 nations and the active participation of our Honorary President, Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado of Japan, Rare Bird Club Presidents, Margaret Atwood and Graeme Gibson, over 20 Rare Bird Club members, and a wide range of other conservation champions and supporters greatly enhanced the meeting itself and the publicity it generated in Argentina and worldwide. Plenary lectures outlining the concepts behind the Preventing Extinctions Programme were well received by the distinguished audience and it was an amazing opportunity to showcase this dynamic new way of saving species and raising support and awareness of the looming extinction crisis.



At the conference BirdLife, generously supported by the Aage V. Jensen Charity Foundation and the Darwin Initiative also launched the *State of the world's birds* report and website. A major milestone, this report showed that the fate of the world's birds is getting worse and becoming so more quickly. The natural rate of extinction is less than one species every 100 years, but the current rate is at least 50 times that and rising. The past 10 years alone have seen 19 species vanish. A total of 56 species were lost in the 20th century; the time to act is now.

With over £2 million already committed by our Global Sponsor, Species Champions and Programme supporters the Preventing Extinctions Programme is off to a great start and the following pages highlight just some of the amazing conservation work already taking place across the globe. We are the sum of our Partnership. The challenges we face together are huge but our resolve has never been greater. Every single person working with BirdLife International shares the same passion and vision – for a world rich in biodiversity, with people and nature living in harmony, fairly and sustainably.

Changes to the 2008 IUCN Red List

BirdLife International is the official Red List Authority for birds for the IUCN Red List, supplying the categories and associated detailed documentation for all the world's birds to the IUCN Red List each year. In the latest assessment in 2008, 1,226 species were considered threatened with extinction (i.e. in the categories of Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Extinct in the Wild). This represents 12.4% of the total of 9,856 extant bird species in the world. An additional 835 species are considered Near Threatened, giving a total of 2,061 species that are urgent priorities for conservation action. The 2008 list included a number of changes to the set of species classified as Critically Endangered. These species face an extremely high risk of extinction in the immediate future because they have an extremely small and fragmented or declining population or range, are declining extremely rapidly, or have a stable or increasing but tiny population.



Eight species were newly uplisted to the Critically Endangered category

- Tristan Albatross *Diomedea dabbenena*
- Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*
- Tachira Antpitta *Grallaria chthonia*
- Reunion Cuckooshrike *Coracina newtoni*
- Mariana Crow *Corvus kubaryi*
- Floreana Mockingbird *Mimus trifasciatus*
- Akekee *Loxops caeruleirostris*
- Gough Bunting *Rowettia goughensis*

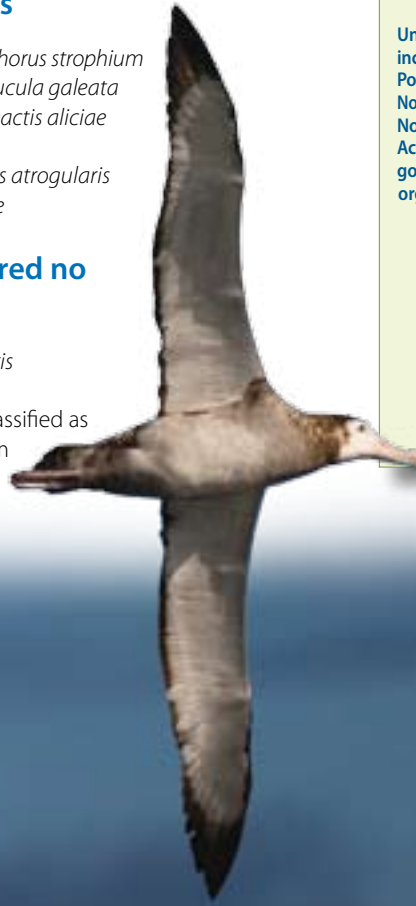
Six were downlisted from Critically Endangered to lower threat categories

- Gorgeted Wood-quail *Odontophorus strophium*
- Marquesan Imperial-pigeon *Ducula galeata*
- Purple-backed Sunbeam *Aglaeactis aliciae*
- Gurney's Pitta *Pitta gurneyi*
- Rondonia Bushbird *Clytoctantes atrogularis*
- Somali Thrush *Turdus ludoviciae*

One species was considered no longer valid

- Guadalupe Junco *Junco insularis*

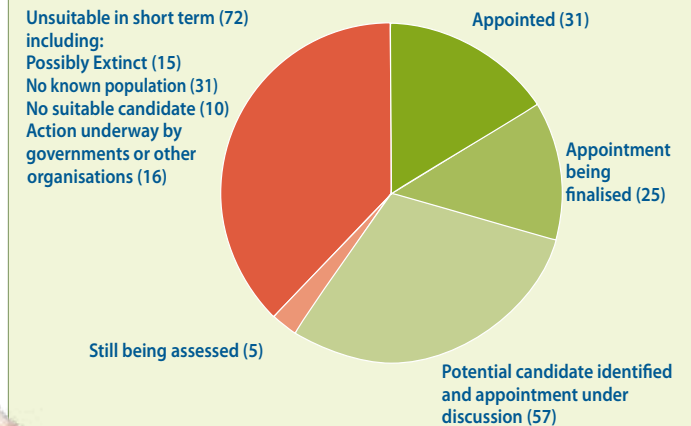
Thus the total number of species classified as Critically Endangered increased from 189 to 190.



Progress with appointing Species Guardians for Critically Endangered species

Central to the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme is the appointment of Species Guardians who take the lead in conserving a globally threatened species in their country or region. Their primary role is to take and encourage greater conservation action for their species, working with national and local governments, other concerned individuals, organisations and local communities.

A breakdown of the 190 Critically Endangered species and their Guardian status so far



Species Guardians in place and in action



| Species Name | Scientific Name | Species Guardian |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Djibouti Francolin | <i>Francolinus ochropectus</i> | Houssein Rayaleh (Djibouti Nature) |
| Fiji Petrel | <i>Pseudobulweria macgillivrayi</i> | Mareqeti Viti (Nature Fiji) |
| Balearic Shearwater | <i>Puffinus mauretanicus</i> | SEO & SPEA |
| White-shouldered Ibis | <i>Pseudibis davisoni</i> | Kry Masphal |
| Dwarf Olive Ibis | <i>Bostrychia bocagei</i> | Associação dos Biólogos Santomenses |
| White-collared Kite | <i>Leptodon forbesi</i> | SAVE Brasil |
| Bengal Florican | <i>Houbaropsis bengalensis</i> | Seng Kim Hout |
| Mindoro Bleeding-heart | <i>Gallicolumba platanae</i> | Haribon Foundation |
| Polynesian Ground-dove | <i>Gallicolumba erythroptera</i> | Manu |
| Lear's Macaw | <i>Anodorhynchus leari</i> | SAVE Brasil |
| Blue-throated Macaw | <i>Ara glaucogularis</i> | Armonia |
| Black-hooded Coucal | <i>Centropus steerii</i> | Haribon Foundation |
| Puerto Rican Nightjar | <i>Caprimulgus noctitherus</i> | Sociedad Ornitológica Puertorriqueña, Inc |
| Black-breasted Puffleg | <i>Eriocnemis nigrivestis</i> | Aves y Conservacion |
| Kaempfer's Woodpecker | <i>Celeus obrieni</i> | SAVE Brasil |
| Alagoas Antwren | <i>Myrmotherula snowi</i> | SAVE Brasil |
| Restinga Antwren | <i>Formicivora littoralis</i> | Pingo D'água |
| Royal Cinclodes | <i>Cinclodes aricomae</i> | Isabel Gómez |
| Uluguru Bush-shrike | <i>Malaconotus alius</i> | Jasson John |
| São Tomé Fiscal | <i>Lanius newtoni</i> | Associação dos Biólogos Santomenses |
| Seychelles Paradise-flycatcher | <i>Terpsiphone corvina</i> | Nature Seychelles |
| Tahiti Monarch | <i>Pomarea nigra</i> | Manu |
| Raso Lark | <i>Alauda razae</i> | Michael Brooke (University of Cambridge) & Paul Donald (RSPB) |
| Taita Apalis | <i>Apalis fuscigularis</i> | Mwangi Githiru |
| Long-billed Tailorbird | <i>Artisornis moreau</i> | Norbert Cordeiro |
| Taita Thrush | <i>Turdus helleri</i> | Mwangi Githiru |
| São Tomé Grosbeak | <i>Neospiza concolor</i> | Associação dos Biólogos Santomenses |
| Azores Bullfinch | <i>Pyrrhula murina</i> | SPEA |
| Belding's Yellowthroat | <i>Geothlypis beldingi</i> | Pronatura Noroeste, A. C. |
| Entre Rios Seedeater | <i>Sporophila zelichi</i> | Aves Uruguay |
| Cherry-throated Tanager | <i>Nemosia rourei</i> | SAVE Brasil |

To find out more about becoming a Species Guardian visit www.birdlife.org/extinction

Guardian Action Updates

The following updates from BirdLife Species Guardians are a selection of the work carried out by Guardians across different continents over the last 18 months.

For information about other Species Guardians work visit www.birdlife.org/extinction

White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni*

Species Guardian: Kry Masphal (BirdLife Cambodia Programme)

Species Champion: in focus

White-shouldered Ibis occurs in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and East Kalimantan, Indonesia. It declined dramatically during the twentieth century. The species has an extremely small, declining and severely fragmented population (numbering fewer than 250 mature individuals) as a result of deforestation, drainage of wetlands, hunting and disturbance. It is projected to decline by >80% over the next three generations (25 years). Western Siem Pang, Cambodia, is the most important site in the world for the species: 108 birds were recorded in November 2006.

The government has made a commitment in principle to designate the area a Protected Forest, but it is currently threatened by plans for a plantation concession, which would result in large-scale forest clearance, road development and immigration into the area.



Actions being implemented

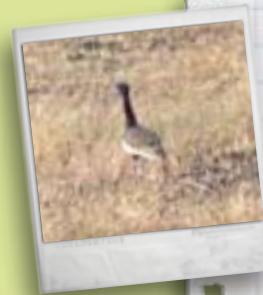
- A proposal to establish a Protected Forest in Western Siem Pang has been prepared, reviewed revised to incorporate the input of the provincial authorities. The finalised documents are now with the Wildlife Protection Office.
- Two consultation meetings were organized in 2007 in Stung Treng provincial town with participants from several government agencies. Strong support was received from all stakeholders. The Deputy Governor of Stung Treng issued a letter in support of the proposal to designate Western Siem Pang a Protected forest.
- A Local Conservation Group at Western Siem Pang has been supported since August 2007. The group, including former hunters, conducts monthly patrols to the most important *trapeangs* (seasonal wetlands) to record key species and any illegal activities. In September–November 2007, 40 chainsaws were confiscated and one illegal logger was sent to court as a result of information provided by the patrol team.
- Research and monitoring continues to be carried out, focusing on the foraging ecology of the species. It is examining the influence of traditional land management practices on the foraging and breeding ecology of White-shouldered Ibis.

Bengal Florican *Houbaropsis bengalensis*

Species Guardian: Seng Kim Hout (BirdLife Cambodia Programme)

Species Champion: British Birdwatching Fair

This bustard of the Indian Subcontinent and South-East Asia has suffered a dramatic decline owing to the widespread and ongoing conversion of its wet-grassland habitat for agriculture. The species's last stronghold, however, is the floodplain of Tonle Sap Lake in Cambodia. This area supports around half (c.500 individuals) of the remaining population and is therefore crucial to the future of the species. Despite its importance, the area is not represented within Cambodia's protected area system and habitat continues to be lost at an alarming rate. Two thirds of the region's grasslands have been lost since the late 1990s and, without immediate intervention, their complete disappearance could occur within five years. In response to this serious threat, the Cambodian government has agreed to create a new category of protected area in the region - Integrated Farming and Biodiversity Areas (IFBAs).



Actions being implemented (in association with the Wildlife Conservation Society)

- Five IFBAs have been created by Provincial Declaration (Deikas), and two new IFBAs have been agreed by the provincial authorities. Work is underway to ensure that no further largescale commercial concessions are awarded.
- In Siem Reap Province an IFBA commission has been established, which has already succeeded in halting a major development project. Two rounds of community consultation over IFBA boundaries took place and the results of these are being combined to produce a revised provisional Deika. A network of village volunteers has been established who will form the basis for community consultation committees.
- Official patrol teams are now operating in Kampong Thom and Siem Reap. A monthly patrol reporting system is now in place. In total, 63 days of patrols were logged and mapped from January–June. A number of signposts, prohibiting the construction of dams, have been erected along IFBAs boundaries, and this activity remains ongoing.
- An in-depth socio-economic study has been conducted by the Centre d'Etude et de Développement Agricole Cambodgien. The report highlights the economic benefits local communities derive through the traditional use of grasslands and will be used to build support among key decision makers and local communities.
- An IFBA awareness programme covering 14 communities, 61 villages and over 1,235 people is underway. Five thousand exercise books containing information on Bengal Florican and IFBAs have been produced and will be distributed to children and young adults at future meetings.

Djibouti Francolin *Francolinus ochropectus*

Species Guardian: Houssein Rayaleh (Djibouti Nature)

Species Champion: British Birdwatching Fair

Djibouti Francolin is a shy and elusive gamebird endemic to juniper woodland in Djibouti, north-east Africa. It is known from just two sites: Forêt du Day in the Goda Massif and the nearby Mabla Mountains, with perhaps only the former population being viable. Available habitat at Forêt du Day was halved between 1977 and 1983 and by 2006, 95% of the remaining plateau juniper was either dead or dying. The species has consequently undergone an extremely rapid population decline, with the population recently estimated at just 612–723 adults. The reasons for the poor condition of the juniper woodlands is unclear, but overgrazing by cattle, camels and goats is certainly a major factor. Other threats include firewood collection, hunting and human disturbance.

Actions being implemented (in association with the World Pheasant Association)

- Through a series of meetings involving local NGOs, government officials and local community representatives, work is underway to advance the implementation of full protected area status for the Forêt du Day and Mabla.
- A campaign to raise community awareness is underway. Brochures on the Djibouti Francolin and its habitat have been produced and distributed widely.
- From April to November 2008, the Guardian (Houssein Rayaleh/Djibouti Nature) undertook an education and awareness campaign in the Forêt du Day and surrounding villages
- Plans for a community-based juniper forest restoration project are underway: three exclusion zones have already been established and have shown encouraging results of natural regeneration. In May 2008, the Day village local community agreed to donate an area of 1,000m² near the village for the establishment of a tree nursery.
- Meetings have been held with local communities to discuss the establishment of Site Support Groups (SSG) for Forêt du Day and Mabla. A workshop was held at Djibouti University to discuss the establishment of a Djibouti Francolin Working Group comprised of local academics and students.



Dwarf Olive Ibis *Bostrychia bocagei*

São Tomé Fiscal *Lanius newtoni*

São Tomé Grosbeak *Neospiza concolor*

Species Guardian: Associação dos Biólogos Santomenses (ABS)

Species Champion for Dwarf Olive Ibis: The Peter Smith Trust

The island of São Tomé (Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe) is situated in the Gulf of Guinea about 250 km off the coast of Gabon. Of the islands numerous endemic bird species three are regarded as Critically Endangered: Dwarf Olive Ibis, São Tomé Fiscal and São Tomé Grosbeak. These forest-dwelling species are all poorly known and confined to tiny areas of suitable habitat. Habitat is under threat from farming and tree-cutting, which are increasing owing to land privatisation and road developments. Introduced black rat, Mona monkey, African civet and weasel are all potential predators.

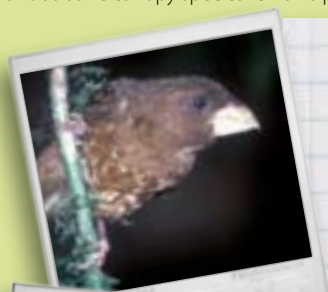
Dwarf Olive Ibis: Until a confirmed sighting was made in 1990, this diminutive forest ibis was known only from historical records and the anecdotal accounts of hunters. The species has since been recorded at a number of sites, and the population is estimated to exceed 50 individuals. Currently, the most serious threat to the species is hunting; with 16 birds reportedly killed in 1996–1997 alone.

São Tomé Fiscal: This long-tailed shrike of primary lowland and mid-altitude forest was previously known from just two records in 1888 and 1928. However, in 1990, it was rediscovered and has since been found at additional sites in the centre and south-east of the island.

São Tomé Grosbeak: This large, stocky finch with a massive bill was, until recently, known from just one 19th century specimen. It was rediscovered in 1991 and although there have been a number of subsequent sightings, this unobtrusive canopy species remains poorly known.

Actions being implemented

- Local community focal points have been identified and trained and are now implementing site-based conservation activities - two are in place at the Emolve palm oil plantation and are working with ABS student researchers and guiding tourists. Chosen focal points are members of the hunting community and are willing to try to influence other hunters not to kill birds.
- An awareness raising campaign is being implemented to highlight the importance of São Tomé's remaining primary forest and the threatened species it supports. The first stage involved an environmental education programme for local children which took place at Emolve.
- Field research and monitoring are being implemented to provide information on the Dwarf Olive Ibis's ecology, population status and specific threats. This will incorporate species monitoring within the São Tomé lowland forests IBA monitoring activities. A census within the protection zone only found one Dwarf Olive Ibis, but this was during the rainy season, and a repeat census was scheduled for December 2008–January 2009.



Long-billed Tailorbird *Artisornis moreau*
 Species Guardian: Norbert Cordeiro

Long-billed Tailorbird occurs at low density in two widely separated forests – in East Usambaras, Tanzania, and in the Njesi Plateau of northern Mozambique. These two subpopulations are 1,000 km apart, and despite much recent fieldwork, there are still no records from any of the intervening forests. An elusive and skulking species, it inhabits forest edge and large canopy gaps where a dense undergrowth of tangled vines and climbers prevails. Although the species is likely to have been under-recorded in the past, its restricted range and low population density suggest that the total population is extremely small. Only c.110 km² of suitable habitat remain in the East Usambaras and areas of unprotected forest remain under considerable pressure from mining, pole-cutting, cultivation and firewood collection. Recent research suggests that the introduced tree *Maesopsis eminii* may further threaten the tailorbird as it regenerates rapidly within forest gaps rendering these areas unsuitable for the species.



Actions being implemented

- Extensive surveys have been carried out in the Amani Nature Reserve and its immediate vicinity and have been extended towards the eastern and northern parts of the East Usambaras to cover the Derema Corridor as well as the Ngua and Ndola areas, with intensive surveys planned for Nilo Forest Reserve in December 2008. Each known territory (currently along the network of 360 census points found in 34 transects) of the Long-billed Tailorbird is being monitored every two months.
- Implementation of an education and awareness scheme for local landowners and other key stakeholders is in progress. Educational materials including posters and leaflets, have been designed in both English and Swahili. In September, 2008 a poster titled "Habitat Requirements of the Long-billed Tailorbird *Artisornis moreau* in Tanzania" was presented by Research Field Officer Fadhili Njilima at the Pan-African Ornithological Congress, in Cape Town, South Africa, while Assistant Species Guardian Jason John gave a talk on the extinction risk of the local birds in the Eastern Arc Mountains to the Tropical Biology Association (TBA) Field Course at Amani in June 2008.
- Work is currently underway to identify key conservation areas for the Long-billed Tailorbird and incorporate these as part of the Amani Nature Reserve Management Plan. All territories discovered are logged by GPS and their coordinates plotted, and territory marking is taking place in areas with high densities.

Belding's Yellowthroat *Geothlypis beldingi*
 Species Guardian: Pronatura Noroeste, A. C.
 Species Champion: British Birdwatching Fair

Belding's Yellowthroat has a fragmented distribution along the coast of Baja California, Mexico. While it is not uncommon at some sites, the total area of suitable habitat is thought to be very small, and hence the total population is probably between 1,000 and 2,500 individuals. It occupies patches of reeds, fringing permanent, lowland marshes or rivers, and never occurs more than 50 m from the water's edge. Owing to its specialised habitat requirements it is highly susceptible to drainage and disturbance of wetlands, including by accidental and deliberate fires, reed-cutting for tourism facilities and house construction, and drainage for agriculture and cattle-ranching



Actions being implemented

- A Conservation Area Plan is being developed identifying key threats and outlining a conservation strategy. In February 2008, Estero de San José del Cabo was designated as a new RAMSAR site, and in November 2008 Pronatura participated in the first RAMSAR workshop in Baja California Sur.
- Research and monitoring is underway to determine current status and threats in the Estero de San José del Cabo Ecological Reserve and at other sites historically important for the species. Point counts in 2007 and 2008 produced an estimate of 340–480 adults at San José del Cabo and c.300 at Santiago, and surveys also took place at El Oro, Todos Santos, and San Pedrito in the 2008 breeding season.
- Sign boards have been designed, and the municipal authorities have agreed to post them at strategic locations around the San José del Cabo reserve. Outreach materials are being prepared to distribute to local schools.
- Local bird guides are being trained (86 to date) to raise the species's profile and strengthen livelihoods links with its conservation. On 17–18 July 2008 a training workshop took place at San José del Cabo: 25 additional participants attended.
- A local bird festival focusing on the species is due to take place in 2009.

Fiji Petrel
Pseudobulweria
macgillivrayi
Species Guardian:
Mareqeti Viti
(Nature Fiji)

Fiji Petrel is believed to be endemic to the island of Gau in Fiji's Lomaiviti archipelago. Formerly known from a single museum specimen collected in 1855, the species's continued existence was only confirmed in 1984 when a bird was caught by Dr Dick Watling of Mareqeti Viti (Nature Fiji). Since this time there have been ten further confirmed or credible records from the island, all involving single birds found grounded in villages. There have also been a number of unconfirmed reports of the species at sea. Although surveys have yet to locate the species's breeding grounds, it is presumed to nest in earth burrows or natural cavities in the forested interior of the island. The greatest current threat facing the species is thought to be introduced cats and rats, which predate nesting birds. The recent establishment of a feral pig population in the south of the island may prove an even more serious threat, however, as pigs have been implicated in the demise of numerous seabird colonies around the world.

Actions being implemented

- The implementation of the Fiji Petrel Recovery Plan is ongoing.
- Workshops are being planned to raise awareness of the proper handling techniques for grounded birds (which are a crucial source of information on the species) and to develop local expertise in the collection of scientific data following such incidents.
- A key priority is to locate and protect the species' nesting sites. Specially trained 'wildlife search' dogs have been used in the past to find Magenta Petrel *Pterodroma magentae* burrows in the Chatham Island. The recent preservation of a freshly dead Fiji Petrel has provided an opportunity to use this technique in Gau. Dogs are currently being trained using feathers from the specimen, and it is hoped that the first searches will take place in July 2009.
- A comprehensive scientific review of the Fiji Petrel and its conservation has been undertaken and recently published in Bird Conservation International (Priddel et al. 2008).

Restinga Antwren
Formicivora littoralis
Species Guardian:
Pingo D'água
Species Champions: Dr
Urs-Peter Stäuble; British
Birdwatching Fair

Restinga Antwren has an extremely small and highly fragmented range around Cabo Frio in Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil. The species inhabits coastal scrub vegetation, notably restinga - a beach-scrub habitat dominated by cacti and bromeliads that develops on sand-dunes. Although found at high densities within its favoured habitat, the species is likely to have undergone a dramatic decline. Today the population numbers only 250-1,000 individuals. Its range occurs within an area of major tourism development, and suitable habitat is under considerable pressure from clearance for beachfront housing and holiday resorts. The species is also threatened by the salt industry and the increasing presence of squatters.

Actions being implemented

- An action plan for the Restinga Antwren is being developed. Its key aim will be to support the creation of the new public protected area in the Maçambaba region.
- Research on the species's population size, breeding ecology and foraging behaviour is underway. This includes mapping of nests during the breeding season.
- An environmental education programme has been developed to raise awareness of the species's plight and the importance of restinga habitat. A capacity-building workshop for school teachers in the municipality of Araruama has been held and educational materials including t-shirts, stickers and posters have been distributed in local schools.

Azores Bullfinch *Pyrrhula murina*

Species Guardian: Sociedade Portuguesa Para o Estudo Das Aves (BirdLife in Portugal)
Species Champion: Birdwatch

Azores Bullfinch is endemic to the Azores, Portugal, where it is confined to native forest in the east of the island of São Miguel. It was locally abundant in the nineteenth century, but underwent a steep decline and is now restricted to extremely small range (<60 km²) because of widespread clearance of native forest for forestry plantations and agriculture. The spread of alien invasive plant species, which have largely overrun the remaining patches of natural vegetation, suppress the natural fruit, seed and bud food supply of the species. A complete census in 2008 estimated the total population at 775 individuals.

Actions being implemented

- Habitat management is underway to improve conditions for the species. This includes: (a) creating fruit tree orchards at lower altitudes to improve food availability in the end of the winter; (b) clearing alien invasive plant species; and (c) planting native species in the core area and buffer zones. In 2008, the total area of suitable habitat free from exotic plants was extended to 225 ha.
- Raising public awareness through production of a website, CD-ROM, brochures and school kits, and through the regional Ministry of Tourism with nature trails and tourist information.
- Evaluating the economic benefits of the project. This showed that the project provides the equivalent of full-time employment for 25 people per year, and €335,000 per year to the regional GDP.
- Research and monitoring of the population size, distribution and habitat quality are being carried out. Although annual surveys have taken place since 2002, the first complete census took place in 2008, involving 48 volunteers surveying all suitable habitat in a single day.
- The São Miguel Natural Park, including Pico de Vara SPA, was classified in July 2008, and a management plan will be developed by the regional government.



Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*
 Species Guardians: Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO: BirdLife in Spain);
 Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves (SPEA: BirdLife in Portugal)

Balearic Shearwater breeds in the Balearic Islands, Spain. In winter, it occurs in the Balearic Sea and off the northeast Spanish coast with most of the population traditionally concentrated between Valencia and Catalonia from November to February. Some birds migrate north in summer to seas off the British Isles and the south of the Scandinavian peninsula. Breeding colony data in 2005 gave an estimate of 2,000–2,400 breeding pairs at 24 different sites, but marine censuses suggest more than 25,000 individuals. Some breeding colonies have undergone steep declines, and modelling indicates that the population is currently declining at 7.4% a year. Threats include predation by introduced cats, rats, genets, habitat degradation from rabbits, bycatch in long-lining fisheries, pollution and climate change. Local, national and international Action Plans have been published.

Actions being implemented

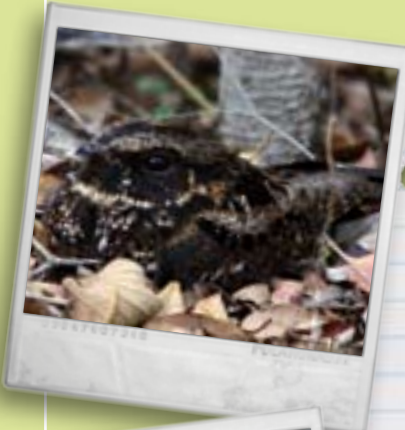


- The wintering and passage distribution of the Balearic Shearwater is being monitored. SPEA have surveyed the continental coast biannually since 2005, under an agreement with the National Fisheries Research Institution, and a network of observers carries out simultaneous counts of birds off the Catalunyan coast. Aerial and oceanographic surveys have been carried out, revealing hotspots for the species along the continental shelf. A two-day workshop on seabird monitoring was held in December 2008
- Coordinated efforts to estimate the global population size are underway, through updated information at the breeding colonies and censuses at sea.
- Research is underway on mortality in longline fisheries. This has confirmed that bycatch is a very important threat, often affecting large numbers at a time (up to 100+ birds caught on a single line have been reported). Results were presented at the meeting of the Working Group on Seabird Ecology of ICES, hosted by SPEA in March 2008 in Lisbon, and will be presented in the annual report of this advisory group. SPEA has produced a questionnaire for fishermen and started to carry out individual interviews with fishermen at eight fish ports, and a bycatch report assessment will be produced in 2009.
- The first inventory of marine Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in Portugal was published in 2008, identifying important areas for Balearic Shearwater. The LIFE Project creating Spanish marine IBA inventory project is due to end in 2009 with the publication of a book of marine IBAs in Spain. A new continuing LIFE+ project will start in 2009 with the aim of integrating the marine IBAs in the Natura 2000 network and developing the appropriate management plans for the Special Protected Areas, and the results of the marine IBA project will be presented to regional governments.

Puerto Rican Nightjar *Caprimulgus noctitherus*
 Species Guardian: Sociedad Ornitológica Puertorriqueña, Inc

It is likely that Puerto Rican Nightjar once occurred in a range of forest habitats across Puerto Rico (to USA). However, today it is thought to be restricted to an extremely small area in the south-west of the island where it occupies dry limestone forest, drier sections of the lower cordillera forest and perhaps dry coastal forest, although new information suggests a population may remain in the south-east. Surveys conducted in the 1980s and 1990s found 712 singing males in 98 km² of fragmented habitat suggesting a total population of between 1,400–2,000 individuals. The species favours closed-canopy forest, comprised mainly of semi-deciduous hardwood trees, with abundant leaf litter and an open understorey. It is found at elevations up to 230 m, but is more commonly encountered above 75m. The greatest threat to the species comes from habitat loss and degradation, with the most important remaining stronghold for the species, Karso del Sur IBA, currently threatened by a proposed windfarm.

Actions being implemented



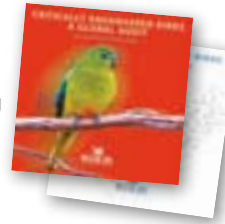
- In collaboration with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), work is underway to prepare a revised Species Action Plan (SAP).
- In August 2008 plans were made for a research project to be carried out by the Mississippi State University, and scheduled to take place from March to May 2009. The study will include surveys to determine the current range, suitable habitat and conservation recommendations, and the results will be incorporated into the revised Species Action Plan.
- Results from the study are expected to extend the nightjar's known distribution.
- The priority conservation actions identified by the SAP will be implemented through a newly-established Puerto Rican Nightjar Conservation Network and facilitated by the Species Guardian. Population estimates have already been established for the areas of Guánica forest, Susua forest and Guayanilla hills, and this research is to be published soon. In October 2008 the Site Support Group for Sierra Bermeja IBA sent an official letter calling for its protection.
- Community awareness is being raised through school presentations and the dissemination of educational materials, and in November 2008 the Species Guardian lead the presentation of the birds chapter of the educational project Seeds for the Environment at an elementary school in Peñuelas.

Communication outputs and finances



Critically Endangered birds: a global audit

A summary review of the state of the world's Critically Endangered birds, the pressures they face, and the actions needed to prevent their extinction. It presents the science underpinning the programme and the actions needed by other organisations, agencies and governments to complement it.



The report can be downloaded at www.birdlife.org/crbirds
The report is drawn from material developed for State of the World's Birds, a broader report which is available for download and as an extensive searchable database – visit www.birdlife.org/sowb for further information and examples.

Threatened birds of the world CR-ROM

In 2008, all the world's 10,000 bird species were re-evaluated by BirdLife for the fifth time, culminating in the release of *Threatened birds of the world 2008* CD-ROM. Almost 6,000 new references were checked, and contributions were received from thousands of scientists, conservationists and birdwatchers, and hundreds of organisations. Applying these extensive data to the quantitative Red List criteria led to the identification of 190 species as Critically Endangered – the targets of the Preventing Extinctions Programme. Assembling the most comprehensive and up to



date information on the status of species and threats to them also allows the identification of the highest priority actions needed to improve the status of these species. All these are documented in *Threatened birds of the world 2008* and in the online species factsheets at www.birdlife.org.



www.birdlife.org/extinction

The Preventing Extinctions web pages provide information about the Programme and regularly updated news stories.

Rare Birds Yearbook 2009

The second edition of this book is now available at www.rarebirdsyearbook.com. Covering the 190 Critically Endangered species, accounts are updated with the latest data provided by BirdLife, as well as stunning new images. It also includes six feature articles and is presented in an easily readable format. New this edition is the presentation of a selection of Endangered species, that are 'ones to watch', as they could become Critically Endangered in the near future. Another addition are case studies of the work of the BirdLife Partnership.



BirdLife PEP Finances to Dec 2008

| | | 2007 | 2008 | Total |
|----------------------------|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| INCOME £ Sterling | Programme Sponsors | | 226,000 | 226,000 |
| | Trusts & Foundations | | 94,605 | 94,605 |
| | Corporates | 43,747 | 57,324 | 101,071 |
| | Individuals | 5,300 | 29,250 | 34,550 |
| | Other | | 5,547 | 5,547 |
| | Total | 49,047 | 412,726 | 461,773 |
| EXPENDITURE £ Sterling* | Conservation Support to Species Guardians | 15,000 | 282,132 | 297,132 |
| | Threatened Species Research & Monitoring | 13,750 | 27,500 | 41,250 |
| | Threatened Species Conservation Advocacy & Communications | 1,000 | 29,150 | 30,150 |
| | Programme Development & Fundraising | 13,750 | 36,000 | 49,750 |
| | Admin & Office overhead | | 27,243 | 27,243 |
| | Total | 43,500 | 402,025 | 445,525 |

*Expenditure includes commitments made at time of going to press

BirdLife Species Champions and Programme supporters



BirdLife International is extremely grateful to all those who have contributed the financial support that has enabled the BirdLife International Partnership to launch the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme.

The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme is the world's largest and most far reaching programme of conservation aimed at tackling the ever-increasing threat of bird extinction and is entirely reliant on charitable donations provided by our Programme Sponsors, Supporters and BirdLife Species Champions.

With a robust structure and process now in place we are already channelling support to many new conservation projects for the world's most threatened birds. These are the 190 species BirdLife International categorises as Critically Endangered (CR) for the IUCN Red List.

We thank the British Birdwatching Fair, our first Global Programme Sponsor, for their extraordinary support and commitment. The British Birdwatching Fair or Birdfair, as it is better known, is the world's largest international Birdwatching event. Over 20,000 visitors attend this extraordinary three day festival which is held each August at The Eggleton Reserve, Rutland Water in the UK.

The Birdfair organisers have committed proceeds from the 2007, 2008 and 2009 Birdfairs to the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme. This has provided the financial support, publicity and momentum that have enabled the establishment of the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme, its subsequent furtherance and, is most importantly, already enabling conservation action for twenty nine Critically Endangered species. Birdfair has already provided funding from the 2007 and 2008 events totalling £491,000.

We thank the BirdLife Species Champions - a new and growing community of companies, organisations and individuals committed to support the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme for a minimum three year period.

Higher level Species Champions choose to support a particular Critically Endangered species by providing significant funding to help its recovery. Our other Species Champions support the overall programme and their funding along with that of our Programme Supporters is collectively pooled to primarily provide resources used for the conservation of those CR species prioritised by the BirdLife International Partnership.

We thank our many Programme Supporters whose one off and ad hoc contributions provide a valuable additional income that is also helping prevent extinctions.

A small proportion of every donation to the Preventing Extinctions Programme provides resources that help us establish conservation for those CR species without a Species Champion and in particular for those that no other organisations are supporting today. In addition, these monies help to fund the vital Science, Policy, Advocacy and Communications that underpin the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme and that help promote the need for further support and also contribute to communications like this annual programme report.

BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme Supporters

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BirdLife Species Champions supporting individual Species



BirdLife Species Champion for Belding's Yellowthroat, Bengal Florican, Djibouti Francolin & Restinga Antwren

in focus



BirdLife Species Champion for White-shouldered Ibis

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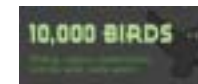


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RARE BIRDS YEARBOOK





PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS

BirdLife comprises more than 100 conservation organisations working together to promote sustainable living as a means to conserve biodiversity

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