Spoony needs your vote!

Title BirdLife?s work to save two key resting and feeding sites in China, used by one of the world?s oddest and most appealing waterbirds is to receive support from Disney?s Friends for Change initiative. The project, 'Saving Spoony?s Chinese Wetlands ' will receive at least $25,000. But if children around the world decide to give it their vote, that support could rise to $50,000, or even $100,000. Spoony- the Spoon-billed Sandpiper- is one of the rarest birds in the world. It gets its name from its spoon-shaped beak, which it uses to pick up food from the mud left uncovered when the tide goes out. Every year it flies over 9,000 km from the Arctic tundra in Russia, where it nests, to the tropics of southern Asia, where it spends the winter. Then, in spring, it flies all the way back again. But the bird that carries its own cutlery is in danger of having nowhere to go to eat. The tidal mudflats it depends on to rest and refuel on its incredible journey are being drained and covered with houses and factories. Fewer and fewer Spoon-billed Sandpipers make it back to breed each year, and unless we act quickly, this tough and determined little bird could soon be gone for ever. There may be as few as 400 left, down from 2,000 just 10 years ago. BirdLife?s China Programme, the Hong Kong Birdwatching Society and friends in China, including the Wild Bird Society of Shanghai and Fujian Bird Watching Society will work at two wetlands near Shanghai, which Spoon-billed Sandpipers stop at on their way round China?s coast. Gathering information about all the waterbirds that use these two wetlands will help us protect them better. Talks, games and field trips will be organised for children at local schools, to inspire them about the values of wetlands and wildlife. Students will be encouraged to form Conservation Groups, and become the ambassadors for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, telling local people and the government that there is a bird nearby that needs their help. Voting opened on 29th November. You can help the Spoon-billed Sandpiper with registering on the Disney website by going to one of the following links and giving Spoony your vote:

- **United States** - http://disney.go.com/projectgreen/explorevote.html
- **Germany** - www.disney.de/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **France** - http://www.disney.fr/ensembleonchangetout/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Netherlands** - www.disney.nl/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Belgium** - www.disney.be/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Poland** - www.disney.pl/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **UK** - www.disney.co.uk/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Italy** - www.disney.it/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Sweden** - www.disney.se/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Finland** - www.disney.fi/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Norway** - www.disney.no/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp
- **Denmark** - www.disney.dk/friendsforchange/explore_and_vote.jsp

?We were thrilled to receive the news that our Spoon-billed Sandpiper project had been selected for Disney?s Friends for Change Initiative?, said Richard Grimmett, BirdLife?s Head

of Conservation. ?This gives us a great opportunity to tell people who live near these sites that their wetlands support a bird rarer than the Giant Panda.? In the past, Disney has provided support for a range of BirdLife projects, from saving the forest home of the Philippines Eagle, to protecting and restoring one of Sumatra?s last intact areas of rainforest. ?We really appreciate Disney?s continued support of our species and habitat conservation programmes, together with our education, awareness and outreach work?, Richard Grimmett added. BirdLife International is coordinating a wide programme of work on Spoon-billed Sandpiper through the Preventing Extinctions Programme. For more details visit www.birdlife.org/extinction **About Disney?s Friends for Change: Project Green** Disney's Friends for Change: Project Green is a multiplatform initiative that helps kids help the planet. To date, more than $2 million has been distributed to environmental charities worldwide, via the Friends for Change/iTunes initiatives, annual grants programs and Youth Service Awards. Through the program, kids can learn practical ways to help the environment, get their friends involved, track their collective impact and have the opportunity to help Disney decide how $1 million in donations to various environmental causes will be made over the course of a year. Kids can join online at www.Disney.com/projectgreen, where they'll pledge to take simple everyday actions, such as turning off the lights and switching to reusable water bottles, and find out more about why these actions matter.