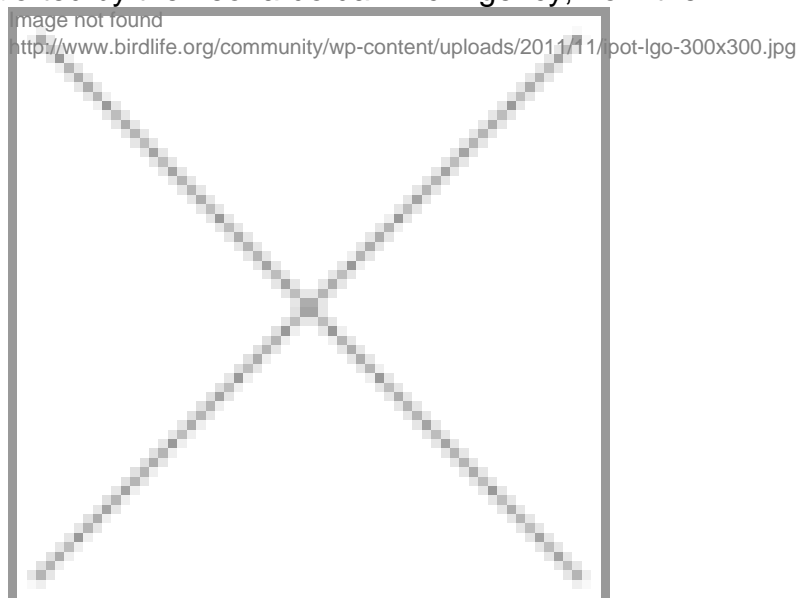


Ornithological tourism project kicks off with meeting in Barcelona

Title

A two-year project promoting responsible and sustainable birdwatching tourism for birds and their habitats in the Mediterranean Basin has begun with a meeting of four BirdLife Partners in Barcelona. The project will provide training for hoteliers, travel companies, transport professionals and guides to help them meet the needs of birdwatching tourists. Much of the training materials will be available online in several languages. The project is lead and coordinated by SEO/BirdLife Spain and involves SPEA (BirdLife in Portugal), BirdLife Cyprus and HOS (Hellenic Ornithological Society), with input also from the BirdLife International Secretariat. "This new work builds on our successful Iberaves project which focused on Spain and Portugal," said Cristina Sanchez, the Ornithological Tourism Project Leader and Director of SEO/BirdLife Catalunya. "Our belief is that birdwatching tourism is an ideal way of bringing sustainable development to Natura 2000 areas and Biosphere Reserves, maximising the benefits to local people and biodiversity, while minimising the negative impacts that tourism sometimes provides. The project is supported by the Leonardo da Vinci Agency, from the



European Lifelong Learning Programme.



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