

Record Sociable Lapwing flock found in Uzbekistan

Title

Follow all the latest from this project at www.birdlife.org/sociable-lapwing One of the most recent conservation organisations to become a range state partner supporting international Sociable Lapwing conservation is BirdLife's Partner UzSPB - the Uzbekistan Society for the Protection of Birds. During their first surveys for the species, this autumn, they made a remarkable discovery - more than 400 Sociable Lapwings present at the Talimarzhan Reservoir, in Kashkadarya Province, during their migration south. The significance of this discovery is considerable - not only is it an important national record but also internationally - as the number of individuals in this migrating flock greatly exceeds the total number of birds we have recorded wintering in India and Pakistan in recent years. UzSPB are one of several new national range state partners that have recently joined our international effort to help recovery of Sociable Lapwing and their involvement and surveys this year have been made possible by support provided to advance the scope of the international project by BirdLife Species Champion - **Swarovski Optik**. The surveys, conducted by a team of five from UzSPB, were led by Dr. Mukhtor Turaev and took place in the Karshinskaja steppe around Lake Talimarzhan, at Lake Ayakagitma in the Kyzyl Kum desert and at the Ecocenter Jeyran and the Tudakul reservoir in the Karnabchul steppe. A total of 29 birds were encountered in three groups during visits to Lake Talimarzhan on September 4th to 8th and then the big flock there was discovered present from September 16th to 20th.



Part of the 400+ flock recorded at The Talimarjan Reservoir -
September 16 - 20th, 2012

During the team's third survey from September 26th to 30th the big flock had left to continue its migration but a further seven Sociable Lapwings were still present in the area - two birds on a water basin near the town of Talimarzhan and five more at the Tudakul reservoir in the Karnabchul steppe.



UzSPB scientists conducting surveys on the shore of Lake Talimarzhan - September 2012

Lake Talimarzhan is a large reservoir of c. 800 ha located on the border between a developed agricultural area and the desert and is situated 45km south-west of Karshi in southern Uzbekistan. Other threatened species using this IBA include Ferruginous Duck and Houbara Bustard. It is designated by BirdLife International as an Important Bird Area (IBA) and **one of our satellite tagged birds "Dinara" was tracked there in October 2010**. This record was the first we ever had of Sociable Lapwing at the site or for that matter in Southern Uzbekistan. The record flock of 400+ Sociable Lapwings present during September 2012 indicate Lake Talimarzhan is likely to be an important regular staging site for Sociable Lapwings migrating to and from their wintering areas in the Indian sub-continent. At present the status of this IBA is unprotected. The record flock in Uzbekistan now raises the question - at which other sites are Sociable Lapwings, that take this easterly flyway south, wintering? The best way of discovering this is to continue our satellite tracking programme. In May 2013 we plan to conduct a comprehensive breeding survey throughout Kazakhstan. The primary purpose of this study will be to evaluate the true scale of the breeding population but we also aim to use the opportunity to fit more satellite transmitters to nesting birds. The undertaking will be considerable and requires six study teams to conduct the necessary research for one month. Such an operation places a significant additional financial burden on the project budget next year and we are now hoping to raise the necessary funds to make this additional study

possible. If you would like to contribute to this important study [please make an online donation here](#). **Follow all the latest from this project at www.birdlife.org/sociable-lapwing**
