

Nature Iraq's Festival in the Marshes

Title

These world famous wetlands, the Mesopotamian Marshes, need little introduction. Drained during the regime of Saddam Hussein, they are now being restored to their former glory and to celebrate, Nature Iraq (BirdLife's Partner), held a spring festival on the banks of the Euphrates. Richard Porter, BirdLife's Middle East adviser, had the privilege of being there and his personal account was broadcast on [BBC's From Our Own Correspondent and in their news magazine](#). Richard writes: This Festival, on the edge of one of the world's great wetland complexes, was a truly memorable occasion, the result of months of planning and hard work by Nature Iraq. In such a short period NI has achieved so much for conservation, often in very difficult circumstances. I'm now eagerly awaiting the publication of *Key Biodiversity Areas of Iraq* which will cover over 100 sites and catalogue the results of eight years of extensive surveys by Nature Iraq biologists. A first step towards a National network of protected areas.

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