



Title In July, Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST - BirdLife in Thailand) joined a government's official event to celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) 2010 organised by Office of Natural Resources and Environment Policy and Planning (ONEP), Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) at Khao Khiew Open Zoo in Chonburi Province, 100 km east of Bangkok, under a theme "Biodiversity is Our Life?". BCST had a booth in the event providing information about bird conservation with focus on our "Project for Conservation of Birds and Wetlands in the Inner Gulf of Thailand" that received financial support from the Environment Fund managed by ONEP of which BCST has been working closely in collaboration on issues related to Ramsar/wetland conservation, East Asia Australasia Flyway and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Our displays draw great interest from Mr. Suvit Khunkitti, MONRE Minister, who trusted BCST to carry out bird conservation works, especially in collaboration with the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP) to come up with database and checklist of birds in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries all over the country and with each park management to develop a field guide to draw interests of visitors to bird watching and conservation. BCST booth also attracted many event attendants, other conservation organisations, journalists/media people and tourists who came up to have conversation about BCST's activities and grab our popular merchandise products. Apart from the booth, BCST had committee members and volunteers to lead bird watching tour around the zoo, which has still maintained much of its forest cover, for ONEP officials and members of the public, especially families, throughout the two days. "This IYB2010 event gave us a great opportunity to draw public interest to bird and biodiversity conservation and to develop further collaboration with concerned government agencies on that matter", said Gawin Chutima, Chairman of Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BirdLife in Thailand). This success also led to another future collaboration as the Zoo Director proposed that BCST organize a bird race in the zoo as a follow-up activity to maintain public interest in bird watching and conservation there. by Wicha Narungsi and Gawin Chutima for Bird Conservation Society of Thailand Photo credit: Wicha Narungsi