

January-March 2009

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**Message from the Chair, BirdLife Council for the Africa Partnership (CAP)**

Dear African Team



One hundred years for nature! At once daunting, inspiring and stimulating! We congratulate the East African Natural History Society on their centenary. The history of the Society tells of

problems and obstacles. We see, in this success story, a lesson in determination.

During the celebrations I had the opportunity to meet with some very inspiring people, notable among them being the "Bird Woman of Kenya". She is the archetype of dedication and service, whose now legendary bird walks is an example that I desire to see replicated across the network. I was also impressed by the young and elegant, poet who warned that with climate change, we are "marked for eviction: earmarked for extinction".

Determination and dedication are, certainly, the twin virtues that we need during these difficult times (financially-speaking) if the poetic prophecies of the young lady are to be avoided. However, I have doubts as to whether there is enough commitment to this. The G20 leaders met on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April and committed a \$1.1 trillion economic stimulus package without a

definite commitment to spend a substantial share of the economic stimulus on low-carbon recovery projects. The environment, thus stands to loose once again as the World commits to a high-carbon economy in which greenhouse gas emissions will continue to rise. We believe that moving climate change down the political agenda until the current economic crisis is addressed is awfully shortsighted. We must seek to retain climate change and environment issues high in the political agendas of our countries and regions through our individual and collective advocacy strategies.

Meanwhile, the World Bank and IMF are ramping up their borrowings and dispersals as never before to rescue the Third World's poor, whom they describe as the innocent bystanders to a problem that originated in the rich north. But I fret. Experience is replete with examples that suggest that these institutions have in the past loaned billions of dollars to Third World governments for projects that spawned ecological and financial ruin. It is our duty to engage our governments for better public oversight not to repeat errors of the past.

.....and if what we hear from Nigeria that a Special Assistant to the Governor of Bauchi State (Nigeria), during a visit to the Yankari Game Reserve (IBA No. NG018 ) ordered his police guards to shoot a hippopotamus that had wandered into the visitor's camp is true, then we in BirdLife need to recommit ourselves to public education about our IBAs at a higher level.

The good news is that the police sharpshooters fired an estimated 147 rounds of ammunition but missed the hippopotamus.

*Professor Emmanuel Obot*  
*Executive Director, Nigeria Conservation Foundation and*  
*Chair, BirdLife Council for the Africa Partnership 2008-2010*

**CONTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES**

We welcome contributions to the e-bulletin from the BirdLife Africa network about bird species, sites, habitats and people. We would also be happy to know about conservation-related events at global, regional, national levels being organized within the network. Please send your contributionsto [antoINETTE.otieno@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:antoINETTE.otieno@birdlife.or.ke). **before 12 May 2009**

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**FOCUS ON BIODIVERSITY MONITORING**

**Africa making progress in tracking biodiversity in key hotspots**

Over the past two years, the BirdLife Africa Partnership has been implementing an EC-funded project aiming to monitor a network of Protected Areas that are also recognized as IBAs across the continent. From 2<sup>nd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009, during a planning and review meeting hosted by Association 'Les Amis des Oiseaux' (AAO, BirdLife in Tunisia), the Partnership had an opportunity to take stock of the progress made so far. Preliminary findings of a mid-term evaluation, presented at the meeting, revealed that the project is on course, and that a lot of work has gone into addressing the key deliverables.

Some notable achievements to date include the training of over 500 individuals in site monitoring, and application of accurate, cost-effective and robust methods to monitor biodiversity in over 100 Protected Areas across the continent.

The project provides support to eight biodiversity-rich African countries, to meet the Convention on Biological Diversity's target to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

The project is managed by the RSPB with support from the BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat.

For more information, please contact the Regional Project Manager, [Thandiwe.chikomo@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:Thandiwe.chikomo@birdlife.or.ke), or visit [http://www.birdlife.org/news/extra/africa/tunisia\\_iba\\_workshop.html](http://www.birdlife.org/news/extra/africa/tunisia_iba_workshop.html)



Invited guests at the official opening of the Annual Planning & Review Meeting, Tunisia

**A biodiversity status and trends report for Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests of Kenya and Tanzania produced**

A preliminary report that assesses the status of biodiversity in the Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests of Kenya and Tanzania (EACF) region based on 19 biodiversity monitoring indicators as agreed upon by the stakeholders in the region has been produced. The report is based on information received by the end of 2008 from individuals working in the region. The report is an output of a BirdLife-led initiative to institute a standardised biodiversity monitoring system across the region.

Some of the highlights in the report include:

- a clear indication of the differences in **forest quality** between differently-managed forest sites. It is clear that forests managed under joint and community-based forest management are recovering better compared with forests managed by government alone, or those under open access regimes.
- An estimate of base-line forest and woodland **cover and change** for the 1990's and 2000's showing that 53 km<sup>2</sup> (5,300 ha or 2.6%) of coastal forest was lost in Kenya and 388 km<sup>2</sup> (38,800 ha or 6.1%) in Tanzania between 1990 and 2000.
- Of the 333 **Globally Threatened** Species identified in the region in 2002, 12 species had been down-listed (moved to lower risk categories) and eight up-listed (moved to higher risk categories) by the end of 2006.
- Over 40 new species have been described from EACF region since 2002, belonging to plants (5 species), larger moths (11), amphibians (18), reptiles (3), birds (3) and mammals (3).
- Baseline information on **ecosystem services**, indicate that the region lost roughly 20,000 Mg C (*emissions per Mg of C processed*) between 1992 to 2004.
- An assessment of **forest management effectiveness** indicated that most had an 'average' management effectiveness score, with Tanzanian Private and Kenyan state-owned forest sites showing better management effectiveness than the other types of forest sites.

For a copy of the full report, contact [paul.ndanganga@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:paul.ndanganga@birdlife.or.ke) or [george.eshiamwata@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:george.eshiamwata@birdlife.or.ke)

### Improving efficiency in monitoring Africa's IBAs

The BirdLife Africa Partnership welcomes a recently published paper which offers the prospect of enhanced efficiency in the monitoring of IBAs.

The paper, titled 'An assessment of land cover and threats in Important Bird Areas in Africa' and published in the BirdLife's journal Bird Conservation International looks for patterns between the presence of particular kinds of threats at IBAs and the characteristics of the sites, including land cover, human population density, projected human population growth and habitat types.

"The correlations described here between land cover and threats could be used to improve monitoring efficiency and identifying the correct strategies appropriate to monitoring threats faced by specific IBAs", said Dr Graeme Buchanan, RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) and lead author of the paper.

"It is anticipated that this pioneering work on improved monitoring for Africa's IBAs will have application across BirdLife's IBA programme worldwide" —Dr Lincoln Fishpool, BirdLife's Global IBA Programme Coordinator

Noting that "...the most prevalent threats to IBAs involve changes in land cover that could be detected from satellites", the authors go on to suggest "...remote sensing could play an important role in the monitoring of African IBAs". Further, the authors indicate that this approach could potentially allow monitoring of a greater number of sites than is feasible by conventional, ground-based approaches.

For more information, contact [Julius.arinaitwe@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:Julius.arinaitwe@birdlife.or.ke), or visit [www.birdlife.org/news/extra/africa/african\\_ibas\\_bci\\_article.html](http://www.birdlife.org/news/extra/africa/african_ibas_bci_article.html)

### African Waterbird Census January 2009

The African Waterbird Census (AfWC) is undoubtedly one of the longest running continental biodiversity monitoring programmes and continues to grow in terms of number of sites covered and the number of countries participating year after year. These



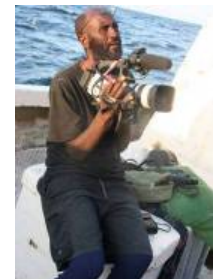
Some of the waterbirds along the Red Sea Coast of Somaliland

counts are coordinated by Wetlands International but organized at national level by volunteer National Waterbird Census Coordinators, some of whom are BirdLife Partners.

In November 2008, Wetlands International (WI) received Euro 15,000 from the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) as a small grant facility to support the International Waterbird Census (IWC) activities in Africa.

Despite their busy schedules, coordinators in 19 countries submitted applications and successfully received the grants that supported part of their January 2009 counts. The countries supported are Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo Brazzaville, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana Guinea, Kenya Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Somaliland, Togo and Zimbabwe.

The small grant support has encouraged efforts in Somaliland where three organisations (Nature Somaliland, Somaliland Wildlife Society and Ecofocus) are now collaborating to contribute data to AfWC. Last year (in 2008) a survey led by Abdi Jama of Nature Somaliland covered the Red Sea coast of Somaliland. This survey contributed the first dataset for Somaliland submitted to the AfWC. The report included data and a video covering waterbirds, coastal wetland habitats and some human activities in the area. This year, the three organizations collaborated and surveyed waterbirds at Ziyara and Berbera sites. This was also a capacity building exercise for Somaliland.



Abdi Jama of Nature Somaliland in action along the Red Sea Coast of Somaliland

At the time of writing this article 25 countries had indicated that they will submit waterbird count data (for the period December 2008 to February 2009) and we expect many more countries to send in data by the end of April deadline.

The data generated by the AfWC is contributing enormously to the Wings over Wetlands (WOW) project ([www.wingsoverwetlands.org](http://www.wingsoverwetlands.org)). WOW is a project aiming to conserve migratory waterbirds and their sites at the flyway scale covering 119 countries in the African-Eurasian region. There are still some important gaps in information on waterbird numbers and their sites in Africa, hence the need to continue exerting more effort

to expand AfWC in terms of increasing the number of participating countries and sites covered.

Thanks to AEWA and WI for support to the AfWC.

Contact: Oliver Nasirwa, Africa Waterbird Census Coordinator, Wetlands International, [Oliver.nasirwa@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:Oliver.nasirwa@birdlife.or.ke)

### 2009 Waterbird Census in Zambia takes off amidst great challenges

As usual, January 2009 was a busy period for the Zambia Ornithological Society (ZOS, BirdLife in Zambia) with the Africa Waterfowl Census activities across the country. This year was particularly difficult with the heavy rains making many sites impossible to visit. In the end, only four sites, Kasisi Dam, Huntley Dams and two sites in Livingstone, were counted. The situation is always difficult; the problem of counting on a wetland in the wet season is that it is invariably flooded, as are all the roads and tracks leading to it. Combined, only 2785 birds were counted of which 3 species, cattle egret, blacksmith plover and ruff accounted for 64% of the total (1789 birds). A notable species recorded was the white-backed duck *Thalassornis leuconotus*, five of which were recorded at Huntley.

If you would like to know more about the Africa Waterbird Census in Zambia, please contact Chris Wood [cwood30@hotmail.com](mailto:cwood30@hotmail.com).

### WETLANDS IN AFRICA

#### North African waterbird conservation gets a boost

A new 3-year project to 'Strengthen waterbird and wetland conservation capacities in North Africa (WetCap)' has just started. The project will build the capacity of wetland management activities at key sites in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Mauritania. It will also promote the wise-use of wetlands which benefit local people by providing clean water and opportunities for fishing, agriculture, recreation and tourism.

Through a series of regional and national workshops specifically tailored to the needs and requirements of the region, WetCap will provide training for conservation professionals from the five countries to improve the conservation status and management of waterbirds at key wetland

sites. The project will also allocate small grants to local waterbird and wetland conservation projects.

WetCap is linked to the ongoing 'Wings over Wetlands (WOW)' project. "This unique project perfectly complements the WOW project by implementing its objectives in North Africa, a region which has not been in the focus of the WOW project so far", said Bert Lenten – Executive Secretary of AEWA, a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) administered international treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbirds across Africa and Eurasia.

For more information about the project, please contact [jonathan.barnard@birdlife.org](mailto:jonathan.barnard@birdlife.org).

### Ramsar Convention raises voice to protect Lake Natron

Lake Natron (IBA TZ031) in northern Tanzania received a boost when the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar COP 10) urged the Tanzania Government to protect the Lake and its biodiversity. The conference took place in South Korea's 'environmental capital', Changwon between 27<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

A Resolution asking the Tanzania government to report to the Secretary General of the convention, on the steps it is taking to implement the recommendations of the Ramsar



Part of the BirdLife delegates preparing for the next plenary

Advisory Mission (RAM) was adopted. Lake Natron has been in the news in recent years since Tata Chemicals Industries proposed to set up a soda ash mining factory at the Lake. Tata's proposal had the support of the Tanzania Government. A strong opposition from stakeholders through BirdLife's "Think Pink" campaign and the Lake Natron Consultative Group (a consortium of 49 institutions in Africa, Asia, America and Europe) slowed down the

project approval process, prompting Tata to temporarily withdraw.

Lake Natron is globally important for biodiversity conservation, being the only breeding site for 1.5 - 2.5 million Lesser Flamingos in East Africa. It is also a source of livelihoods to the local Maasai community.

Conservation groups are concerned that the soda ash factory would interfere with flamingo breeding, put community livelihoods at risk, cause environmental degradation and hurt tourism.

Lake Natron attracted immense interest at the Ramsar COP10.

Among those who were touched by the flamingo story was Kim Hong Il, the editor of the children's environmental magazine

*Ecogeneration*. Kim prepared a mini poster written on "Save Lake Natron Flamingos" which he displayed in the corridors of Changwon's CECO Convention Centre, attracting a lot of attention!



Kim of *Ecogeneration* campaigns for Natron

If you would like to know more about this story and how to contribute to saving Lake Natron, please contact [ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke)

### Awareness raising for the Wings over Wetlands Project

Wings over Wetlands (WOW) project has started a series of public awareness raising meetings with key conservation organizations in the Eastern and Southern Africa sub-region. The first one was held at the Kenya Wildlife Service headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009. The purpose of these meetings is to introduce tools and products developed by the project to aid wetlands and waterbirds conservation in the region.

Mr. Patrick Odongo, Senior Assistant Director and Head of the Species Conservation Programme represented the Director, Kenya Wildlife Service during the meeting. He officially opened the meeting citing the good working relationship between KWS and BirdLife.

The briefing was kicked off by Ken Mwathe, the current Project Manager, who gave the

background of the project, as the largest migratory water bird conservation initiative in the African-Eurasian region attempting to address the needs and threats of the birds along the migratory pathway. He highlighted the three components namely; Critical Site Network Tool, capacity development for flyway conservation, and information/lessons exchange.

Oliver Nasirwa, the Flyways Officer described the Critical Sites Network Tool and how the already available trial version can be used.

Jane Wamboi, the Capacity Development

Officer explained the development of modules for training in wetlands and waterbirds conservation

using the flyways approach. The modules provide

a broad generic outline that can easily be adapted to actual training needs of any target group in different countries and regions. Module one is "understanding the flyway conservation concept". Module two is "applying the flyway concept" which explores in more detail the policy, legal, research and conservation tools available for flyway conservation, and where and how to apply these at local, national, regional and flyway level. Module 3 is "communicating the flyway concept".

"WOW activities in this sub-region are coordinated through a sub-regional hub comprised of staff from Kenya Wildlife Service, Wetlands International and BirdLife Secretariat, hosted by the BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat. Such collaboration between organizations is essential in addressing flyways conservation", said Dr Julius Arinaitwe of BirdLife International in his closing remarks.

For more information about this meeting, please contact [jane.wambui@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:jane.wambui@birdlife.or.ke). For information about the WoW project in Eastern and Southern Africa, please contact [ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke)



Participants at the debrief meeting at the Kenya Wildlife Service Headquarters, Nairobi

### REGIONAL PROJECT NEWS

#### Students provide insights into East African wildlife

Students funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) have rediscovered a snake species, described two new invertebrate species, and demonstrated that local people directly benefit from conservation management. These findings are an outcome of a US\$ 200,000 small grant programme for postgraduate research in the Eastern Arc Mountains and Coastal Forests of Kenya and Tanzania. The programme was implemented by BirdLife (Secretariat in liaison with Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania and NatureKenya), on behalf of a Coordination Unit that also includes ICIPE, WWF and the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG).

Highlights of the research included the rediscovery in the Uluguru North Forests of the Ornate Shovel Snout Snake *Prosymna ornatissima*, which had not been recorded for over 80 years. An Elephant Shrew observed in the Boni-Dodori forest could be a new species unique to that site. Two new species of plant-inhabiting Tetranychid mites were described; many of these mites have severe economic impacts on agriculture, so it is important to be able to identify them.

The research provided important information for improving connectivity between fragmented habitats, investigated links between biodiversity, livelihoods, and ecosystem services including carbon sequestration in agroforestry systems. One project demonstrated that honey yields and quality for communities adjacent to Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, Kenya, benefit from forest conservation.

For more information, contact [paul.ndanganga@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:paul.ndanganga@birdlife.or.ke) or visit [www.birdlife.org/news/news/2009/03/africa\\_student\\_eba.html](http://www.birdlife.org/news/news/2009/03/africa_student_eba.html)

**BirdLife Africa's Climate Change Project Prepares the Continent for Adaptation.**

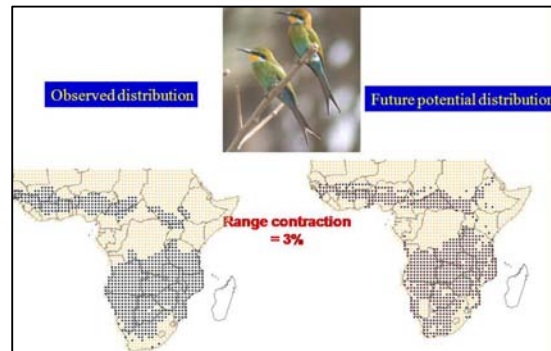
Climate change is here with us. With the global climate expected to change considerably if the current levels of green house gases released into the atmosphere are not checked, BirdLife International is already looking for viable options for adaptation. Africa and other developing countries are expected to suffer most from the effects of climate change and so this continent

needs to be at the forefront in seeking these solutions.

Through financial support from the MacArthur Foundation, BirdLife Africa has been carrying out a project "conservation in the face of climate change: developing an adaptive management framework". The project which started in April 2007 aims to determine how African Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and priority bird species will be impacted by climate change. More importantly, the project will come up with a suite of tools, and general management and policy options for adaptation.

The project has made tremendous progress; here is a summary of what has been accomplished:

- The Africa wide models showing how birds and the Important Bird Area system will be impacted by climate change were developed. These models show that on average, an IBA will experience a shift of 35-45% of its priority species by 2085 as a result of climate change. However, there is a great variation in how species will shift within IBAs in Africa in



Swallow-tailed bee-eater represents some species for which modelling show observed and future range distributions indicating future range contraction of 3%

response to changing climate. IBAs lying on a belt that runs from Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, northern parts of South Africa to Mozambique, are expected to experience the greatest shift.

- Fine scale modelling work in the Albertine Rift shows that all the 14 focus endemic bird species are at severe risk of extinction from projected climate change impacts.
- An Africa wide Adaptive Management Framework that considers five general management categories depending on the proportion of species projected to

remain, emigrate or clone individual IBAs has been developed.

- The first phase of the development of a web-based information exchange facility (Clearing House Mechanism) for the adaptation to climate change was completed. This website will be accessible to all people looking for information on biodiversity and climate change. There will be discussion forums, blogs and individuals will be able to post documents and download the same. When complete, it promises to be an exciting one-stop shop for information on climate change.
- A communication plan has been developed and is being applied to extensively report and disseminate project information using BirdLife Africa Secretariat's communication system.

This project comes to an end in July 2009.

For more information, please contact [ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:ken.mwathe@birdlife.or.ke)

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP NEWS

### Cameroon

#### New project to empower indigenous people at Ngovayang, Cameroon, launched.

A five-year project aimed at improving the livelihoods of the forest dwelling Bagyeli/Bakola and their Bantu neighbours living in and around the Ngovayang Massif Forest in Cameroon was launched on November 7, 2008. This £450,000 project is funded by the Department for International Development of the UK government through BirdLife



Construction of new and improved houses by the indigenous people

International and will be implemented by the Cameroon Biodiversity Conservation society (CBCS, BirdLife in Cameroon). This project is a successor to another five years project (2003-2007) that was funded by Comic Relief and the Community Empowerment Fund aimed at empowering the

Bagyéli/Bakola communities around Ngovayang Forest to advocate for and play a bigger role in management of their natural resources (including land rights). The new project will continue with some of the activities initiated by the first project such as the construction of houses for these forest-dwelling hunter-gatherer communities.

The project launch was applauded by all stakeholders, especially the indigenous people empowered through the first project.

For further information on this project contact: Cameroon Biodiversity Conservation Society: [cbcs\\_cam@yahoo.fr](mailto:cbcs_cam@yahoo.fr)

### Ghana

#### Wildlife Clubs of Ghana Marks 21st Anniversary

The Wildlife Clubs of Ghana was 21 years in 2008.

To commemorate the anniversary, year-long festivities were organised. The activities began with a **Press Conference** and a **Public launch**

which involved a public march through the main streets of Accra, the capital city of Ghana. The Press Conference was preceded with a presentation on "The Wildlife Club of Ghana", highlighting its origin, achievements, challenges and opportunities as the leading and original youth movement on conservation and environmental protection in Ghana. The theme of the celebrations was: *Wildlife Clubs! 21 Years of Conservation Education in Ghana, Impacts and Prospects*. Some highlights of the celebration were a national quiz competition, poetry recitals and art competition. The quiz was to test club members' knowledge on environmental issues and the legal frameworks governing the nation's environment.



Wildlife club members in a choreography performance during the NYFFG



Some of the Ghana Wildlife Club members pose for a photo during NYFFG

The grand finale of the anniversary celebrations was the National Youth Forum on Environment Ghana (NYFEG). Held on **20th February 2009**, the theme of NYFEG was "The Role of the Ghanaian Youth in Environmental management". Students from selected wildlife clubs made presentations on the state of the nation's forests, water bodies, parks and the impact of mining on the environment among others. Over one thousand members of the Wildlife Clubs of Ghana in various senior and junior high schools in the country participated in the forum. Dignitaries who graced the occasion include the country's Chief Director of the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology and the Chief Executive Officer of the Ghana Chamber of Mines. Currently there are over 1,062 clubs in schools and communities throughout the country.

## Kenya

### Happy 100th Birthday NatureKenya!

NatureKenya (BirdLife in Kenya) is celebrating its 100th birthday with several events this year.

NatureKenya started when a small group of naturalists gathered with the objective of creating a society that would promote the understanding of the remarkable flora and fauna of Eastern Africa.



The highlight event was a centenary gala dinner on 28th March. Other events include a corporate golf tournament, nature fair and a series of talks. NatureKenya has also created some great centenary gifts to buy and use. They include wheel covers, polo shirts, caps and centenary postage stamps. To get involved in the event, buy some gifts, or to find out more, please visit [www.naturekenya.org](http://www.naturekenya.org)

## Liberia

### World Wetlands Day Celebrated In Liberia

The Society for the conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL) in collaboration with Farmers Associated to Conserve the Environment (FACE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), local and international NGOs, government Ministries and Agencies and Local Authority from Cape Mount IBA (IBA No. LR005) observed the World

Wetlands Day (WWD) on 2-3 February, 2009 in Monrovia and Cape Mount respectively.

In Monrovia, the program commenced with a march from the YMCA Building to Providence Island where an indoor event was held. The keynote speaker for the day was Dr. Lawrence Bropleh, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism.



Participants participate in a clean up exercise at Cape Mount IBA

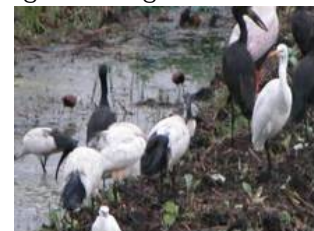
The program extended the following day, Tuesday, 3 February, 2009 to Cape Mount IBA with SCNL, FACE, Forestry Development Authority (FDA), EPA and Actions Against Climate Change in Liberia (AACCL) leading a cleaning up campaign along the shores of Lake Piso.

The Superintendent of Grand Cape Mount County, Mrs. Catherine Watson Khasu welcomed the local NGOs and mobilized her public to join the cleaning campaign. The National BirdLife Program Coordinator and the Technical Advisor to FACE Mr. Flomo P. Molubah and Mr. Richard S. Sambolah respectively gave presentations, aired on a local radio station (Radio Piso) about the RAMSAR Convention and the need to conserve and protect wetlands including Cape Mount. The campaign was concluded with the erection of billboards along the beach and the lake with various messages highlighting the importance of beach and Cape Mount IBA. The campaign ended successfully with the County's Superintendent proposing a one-day clean-up exercise on the last Saturday of every month.

## Rwanda

### Braving the elements to save birds in Rwanda

Due to fear of drowning, traveling on water is something that most people in Rwanda fear. It becomes even more dreadful when someone has to do it without a life jacket.



A diversity of the waterbirds observed at Lake Kamudemeri during the survey

Serge Nsengimana, the

Chief Executive Officer of the Association pour la Conservation de la Nature au Rwanda (ACNR, BirdLife in Rwanda) and his team daringly paddled over the small Lake Kamudeberi located within the Akanyaru wetlands IBA (IBA RW005), for the sake of bird conservation. The lake and its surrounding were discovered to be a birds' paradise during a recent birds' survey supported by the African Bird Club (ABC). The lake hosts most of the special waterbird species typical of the Lake Victoria biome including the Papyrus Gonolek, papyrus Canary and Northern Brown-throated Weavers

Main threats observed during the survey include cultivation right up to the edge of the lake, fires, fishing using illegal mesh-sized nets (mosquito nets), overgrazing and too frequent harvesting of sedges for mulching.

Prior to this survey, there was a serious lack of up to date information on the biodiversity of this site, probably because of its remoteness compounded by impassable roads.



Mr Serge crossing the swamp on a pole to the Lake Kamudeberi

At least 18 bird species were recorded at the site including a large population of immature Rufous-bellied Herons.

As a follow-up to the survey, the ACNR team occasionally visits the site to sensitize local residents on the importance of bird conservation. Awareness raising activities focus on discouraging wildfires, unsustainable papyrus exploitation and overgrazing in swamps. ACNR also plans to initiate a nature club at the primary school near Lake Kamudeberi.

Similar surveys have been conducted in Lake Mugesera and in Lake Rweru with support from Wings Over Wetlands (WOW), a UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project.

For more information, please contact Serge Nsengimana @ [acnrwanda@yahoo.fr](mailto:acnrwanda@yahoo.fr)

## South Africa

### The Prince of Wales gets an update on the Success of BirdLife South Africa and Albatross Task Force

On 23 January 2009 at a Clarence House reception in London, UK, The Prince of Wales was updated on activities geared at saving seabirds. Though 18 of the world's 22 species of albatross are threatened with extinction – they now have a brighter future thanks to a pioneering scheme uniting conservationists, the fishing industry and the South African government.

The Prince of Wales – who has long been concerned about the dramatic decline of the albatross – was informed how for every 100 albatrosses being killed in fisheries in South African waters in 2006, 85 are now being saved thanks to the efforts of the Albatross Task Force working with the government and the fishing industry. Meidad Goren of BirdLife South Africa led the South African team and updated Prince Charles on the work of the Task Force.

In 2006, BirdLife International and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) launched the Albatross Task Force (ATF) in South Africa –



The Prince of Wales addressing the gathering at the event

the first international scheme to

place specialized instructors on fishing vessels specifically to reduce the huge number of seabirds killed accidentally in fishing industries. The scheme initially worked with the longline fishing industry – targeting tuna and swordfish – but more recently it has been extended to the trawling industry.

This partnership has successfully reduced the accidental killing of albatrosses and other seabirds by 85%. The approach is being adopted by other countries with globally important seabird populations.

For more information visit [www.savethealbatross.net](http://www.savethealbatross.net) and [http://www.birdlife.org/news/news/2009/02/atf\\_prince\\_charles\\_event.html](http://www.birdlife.org/news/news/2009/02/atf_prince_charles_event.html)

## OTHER REGIONAL NEWS

### Malimbus & Bulletin of the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society now available online

The West African Ornithological Society has completed a project begun in 2004 to make the full text of *Malimbus* (except recent volumes), and of *Bulletin of the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society* (predecessor of *Malimbus*), freely available on-line. These journals can now be accessed in their entirety from the beginning in 1964 to 2004 on the WAOS website:

<http://malimbus.free.fr>

## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### Watson International Scholars of the Environment Program 2009

Opportunity for environmental leaders from Africa for advanced training in land-change history, sciences, and policies. Contact Laura Sadovnikoff, Programme Manager ([Laura\\_Sadovnikoff@Brown.edu](mailto:Laura_Sadovnikoff@Brown.edu))

Application can be downloaded directly from the website.

[http://www.watsoninstitute.org/ge/watson\\_scholars/](http://www.watsoninstitute.org/ge/watson_scholars/)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

**No specific deadline.** The African Bird Club Conservation Awards. Visit: <http://www.africanbirdclub.org/club/ConsFund.html>

**No specific deadline.** Chester Zoo Conservation and Research Grants. Visit: <http://www.chesterzoo.org/conservation.asp?Page=126>

**No specific deadline.** Rufford Small Grants for Nature Conservation. Contact: [josh@rufford.org](mailto:josh@rufford.org) or visit: <http://rufford.org/rsg>

**No specific deadline:** International Foundation for Science. Visit: <http://www.ifs.se/>

**April 2009:** Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund. A downloadable form is available on the Species Fund website at Two types of grants are available; up to \$5,000 or those between \$5,000 and \$25,000.

Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

Contact: [zayedprz@emirates.net.ae](mailto:zayedprz@emirates.net.ae) or visit: <http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org>.

**May 1st 2009** - The IUCN NL Small grants for the Purchase of Nature programme supports local NGOs in the purchase of vulnerable nature, with the aim to conserve biodiversity.

Contact: [spn@iucn.nl](mailto:spn@iucn.nl)

Website:

[http://www.iucn.nl/fondsen/purchase\\_of\\_nature/](http://www.iucn.nl/fondsen/purchase_of_nature/)

**January 1<sup>st</sup> and July 1<sup>st</sup> each year:** Club 300 Foundation. Grant Size: USD5,000.

Contact: [birdprotection@club300.se](mailto:birdprotection@club300.se) or visit:

<http://www.club300.se/Birdprot/Birdprotection.aspx>

**Deadline: 1st July 2009:** The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF). Focus on conservation, management, community work etc at WHS or potential WHS sites) is in. Contact: [info@awhf.net](mailto:info@awhf.net) or visit <http://www.awhf.net/>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**19-23 Apr 2009:** 16th International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species, Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, Montreal, Quebec, Canada <http://www.icaais.org/>

**9-10 May 2009:** World Migratory Bird Day 2009: Theme: Barriers to Migration



<http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org>

11-15 May 2009, Manado, Indonesia: World Ocean Conference. Contact:

[info@woc2009.org](mailto:info@woc2009.org)

Visit: <http://www.woc2009.org/home.php>

22 May 2009, Multiple Venues: International Day for Biological Diversity: 2009



theme "Biodiversity and Invasive Alien Species"

Visit: <http://www.cbd.int/idb/>

5 Jun 2009, Mexico, World Environment Day 2009: "Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat

Climate Change" > Visit:  
<http://www.unep.org/wed/2009/english/>

**May 2009** International Symposium on Remote Sensing of Environment (ISRSE) in Stresa, Italy Visit:  
<http://isrse-33.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

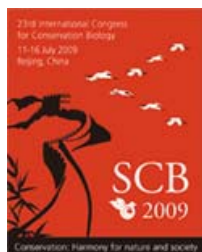
**12- 13 June 2009:** Urban Nature 2009 International Forum on Local Governance & Biodiversity Conservation Edmonton, Canada, Alberta. Contact: Ms Marike Kotzé  
[lab@iclei.org](mailto:lab@iclei.org)  
Visit: [www.iclei.org/urban-nature2009](http://www.iclei.org/urban-nature2009)

17 June (every year): The **World Day to Combat Desertification** is observed every year on 17 June.  
Contact:  
[secretariat@unccd.int](mailto:secretariat@unccd.int)  
Visit:



<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/june17/2009/menu.php>

11-16 July 2009, Beijing, China  
The 2009 Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology will be held in Beijing, The Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences  
Visit: <http://scb2009.ioz.ac.cn/index.asp>



**13-16 Oct. 2009,** Cape Town, South Africa. 2<sup>nd</sup> DIVERSITAS Open Science: Biodiversity and society: understanding connections, adapting to change. Abstract deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. Email: [info-OSC2@diversitas-international.org](mailto:info-OSC2@diversitas-international.org)

**23<sup>rd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> August, 2009.** 2<sup>nd</sup> World Congress on Agroforestry, Nairobi, Kenya – The Future of Global land Use.  
Contact: [wca2009@cgiar.org](mailto:wca2009@cgiar.org)  
Visit:  
<http://www.worldagroforestry.org/wca2009/>

**18 - 25 October 2009** 13th World Forestry Congress, Buenos Aires, Argentina:  
Organized by: U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization - FAO  
Contact: Mr. Douglas Kneeland (E-mail: [douglas.kneeland@fao.org/info@wfc2009.org](mailto:douglas.kneeland@fao.org/info@wfc2009.org))  
Also visit: <http://www.fao.org> or [www.wfc.org](http://www.wfc.org)

**7-18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009:** COP15: United Nations Climate Change Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark  
Date: 30 November - 11 December 2009  
Venue: Copenhagen, Denmark  
Contact: Poul Kjar, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark-[poukja@um.dk](mailto:poukja@um.dk)



**15-19 Mar 2010:** Africa CAP Meeting, Kasane, Botswana  
Contact [hazell.thompson@birdlife.or.ke](mailto:hazell.thompson@birdlife.or.ke)

**3 - 7 July 2010**  
24th annual meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology - University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, hosted by the North American Section of the SCB  
<http://www.conbio.org/Activities/Meetings/?CFID=1820233&CFTOKEN=19288025>

**22-28 Aug 2010**  
25th International Ornithological Conference 2010 - Campos do Jordão, Brazil  
Visit: <http://www.ib.usp.br/25ioc/>

**18 - 29 October 2010:** Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan.  
Organized by: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity  
Contact: Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Contact: [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int)  
Visit <http://www.cbd.int>