

FOR MANY, HOPE IS FADING...

Juan Fernandez Firecrown
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PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS



... HELP US BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE



Sir David Attenborough
Honorary Patron of the BirdLife Rare Bird Club and BirdLife Species Champion for Araripe Manakin.

'We have no right to exterminate the species that evolved without us. We have the responsibility to do everything we can to preserve their continued existence.'

THE BIRDLIFE PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS PROGRAMME

BirdLife International is a global conservation partnership and the world's leading authority on birds and their habitats. With Partners in over 100 countries and territories, we work across borders and without politics. Our unique structure, and 10 million supporters worldwide, put us in a position to really make a difference.

THE NEED TO SAVE THE WORLD'S MOST THREATENED BIRDS

One in eight species of bird is threatened with extinction and the number continues to rise thanks to habitat destruction, climate change and invasive species.

Birds have immense biological and economic value, providing benefits such as pest control

and pollination. Protecting and conserving their habitats benefits nature as a whole and is valuable for people and communities, ensuring crucial ecosystem services, such as flood defences and water quality, are maintained.

The fate of the birds is the fate of the earth; the fate of the earth is the fate of humanity.

With so many species in crisis, BirdLife International is acting now and has launched a major new initiative: the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme. This is spearheading greater conservation action, awareness and funding support for all of the world's most threatened birds.

Central to the new programme is the development of two new communities; BirdLife Species Guardians, experts who will take the lead in conserving threatened species in their country and BirdLife Species Champions, organisations or individuals who will raise awareness for and fund the vital conservation that is so urgently required.

FOR SOME, THE FUTURE IS BLEAK



THE THREATS FACING BIRDS

In spite of having the ability to flourish in some of the most hostile places on earth, 1,226 species of bird face extinction. That's 12% of the total 9,856 bird species in the world. One hundred and ninety of them have been classified as Critically Endangered, the highest threat category. If we don't act now, we could lose them within 10 years.

Birds are now facing a wider range of threats than ever before, almost entirely as a result of human activity.

Agriculture, logging and invasive species are the most severe threats, respectively affecting 87%, 55% and 51% of globally threatened bird species. These threats cause stresses on bird populations in a range of ways, the most common being habitat destruction and degradation, which affect 93% of threatened species.

© Graham Robertson, Australian Antarctic Division



Many species of albatross are now threatened with extinction because they are unintentionally killed by commercial longline fisheries.

Climate change is fast becoming another major threat adding yet more pressure. A total of 24 Critically Endangered species are threatened by climate change and the associated severe weather, primarily storms and flooding, that it generates. This is a trend that looks set to increase in the near future as species face shifts in range, loss of habitat to rising sea levels, storms, droughts, and changes in the marine ecosystem.

© Marco Lambertini, BirdLife



The loss of tropical forests, and particularly lowland forests such as these in Indonesia, represents one of the greatest threats to global bird diversity.

ALREADY LOST FOREVER:

- Slender-billed Grackle, 1910
- Red-moustached Fruit-dove, 1922
- Thick-billed Ground-dove, 1927
- Hawaiian Oo; one of four honey-eaters to become extinct after Europeans arrived, 1934
- Laughing Owl, 1960s
- Alaotra Grebe; became extinct in Madagascar owing to fishing and introduced carnivorous fish, 1988
- Po'o-uli; a honeycreeper, presumed extinct in Hawaii through habitat destruction and disease-carrying mosquitoes, 2004

PAINSTAKING, RIGOROUS WORK GETS RESULTS

THE SCIENCE OF SAVING SPECIES

BirdLife International is not only widely recognised as a world leader in identifying global conservation priorities, it is also regarded as a leading scientific body. Our unwavering commitment to painstaking data-gathering and rigorous analysis, international field projects and expert consultation ensures that best practice conservation measures are always put in place.

CLASSIFYING THREAT STATUS

BirdLife is the Red List Authority for birds for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. Species are assigned to Red List categories depending on population size, population trend, range size and other parameters. By constantly monitoring trends, BirdLife International plays an important role in identifying the planet's greatest conservation challenges.

The IUCN Red List currently includes species such as White-rumped Vulture. The population in India has plunged by 99.9% since 1992 and is still dropping by more than 40% per year. Consequently, this species was uplisted to Critically Endangered in 2000.

VITAL WORK REVEALS THE DANGERS

As well as classifying the conservation status of each species, the BirdLife International Partnership works around the world on projects such as site protection and management, control of invasive alien species, habitat restoration and reintroduction, and improving people's livelihoods.

Finding and monitoring many threatened species is notoriously difficult but without the vital research work undertaken by the BirdLife Partnership, we simply wouldn't be aware of the enormous numbers of birds disappearing.

Key focuses include:

- Site protection
- Site management
- Invasive species control
- Species recovery
- Captive breeding
- Reintroduction
- National legislation
- Habitat restoration
- Habitat protection
- Awareness raising and communication

The data we generate about species, sites and habitats set the benchmark for monitoring the world's birds and other biodiversity, and demonstrate our achievements in pursuit of a more sustainable world.



BIRDS AS INDICATORS

Birds are acutely sensitive indicators of the health of the environment. They have been studied extensively for many years, which means there is a huge amount of data covering all of the world's bird species. This also makes them useful for gauging priorities for other animals and plants. This is vital in a world where so little is known about the majority of biodiversity.

Changes in the numbers and distribution of birds are used to measure environmental fluctuations, including pollution, climate change or habitat degradation, and whether land uses, such as intensive farming or forestry, are environmentally sustainable.

CONSERVATION DOES WORK

By gathering and analysing data, BirdLife is ensuring that scarce resources are being channelled where they will make the most difference. As a direct result of this work, many species have been saved from extinction by timely intervention backed by appropriate resources and political will.

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

PROOF THAT CONSERVATION GETS RESULTS AGAINST ALL THE ODDS

In the 10 years between 1994 and 2004, the extinction of 16 species was prevented as a direct result of targeted conservation; here are just a few examples by the BirdLife International Partnership:



NORTHERN BALD IBIS

This species underwent a long-term decline and now has an extremely small population, with over 95% of wild birds concentrated in one subpopulation in Morocco. Numbers are currently increasing owing to management actions and consequent improved breeding success thanks to work by SEO/BirdLife and RSPB.



RAROTONGA MONARCH

Endemic to the Cook Islands in the Pacific, by 1932 the population was no more than 50 individuals. A recovery plan initiated in the 1980s by Te Ipakurea Society, which includes the control of rats, has improved breeding success and decreased mortality among adults. The population had grown to 291 by 2006.



MARQUESAN IMPERIAL-PIGEON

Endemic to the Marquesas Islands in French Polynesia, until 2000 this species was only known to exist on the island of Nuku Hiva. However, it has now been downlisted from Critically Endangered following the translocation of individuals to a new island and establishment of a second population by MANU.



SEYCHELLES MAGPIE-ROBIN

This species qualified for downlisting in 2000 as a result of work to control invasive alien predators, restore its habitat, translocation to other islands, and supplementary feeding. Led by Nature Seychelles, these actions have resulted in reduced threats and increased numbers.

A NEW ERA NEEDS NEW SOLUTIONS

THE BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE THREAT OF EXTINCTION

Bird species are disappearing faster than ever before. **One hundred and ninety species are facing the threat of imminent extinction.** The natural rate of extinction is less than one species every 100 years, but the current rate is at least 50 times that and rising. The past 30 years alone have seen 19 species vanish. A total of 56 species were lost in the 20th century; the most costly era for extinctions ever recorded.

*Enough is enough.
It is time to take a stand.*

EXTINCTION STOPS HERE

BirdLife International's work in evaluating and monitoring the status of the world's bird species began over 50 years ago. Through the BirdLife Partnership, we enjoy a global presence, scientific excellence, influence with decision makers, and first-rate conservation expertise in the field. We understand the issues that face every globally threatened bird, and the main conservation actions they need.

These 10 measures alone will go a long way to preventing future extinctions:

- Prevent the veterinary use of **diclofenac** in Asia and Africa
- Apply **seabird by catch** mitigation measures in longline fisheries
- Control **invasive alien species**
- Control **the caged bird trade** and unsustainable **hunting**
- Tackle multiple threats on **Hawaii**, and on **French** and **UK overseas territories**
- Protect remnant forests on **São Tomé, Comoro Islands** and **Sangihe, Indonesia**
- Safeguard Atlantic Forest remnants in **Brazil**
- Protect and manage tropical forest Important Bird Areas in **Indonesia, the Philippines, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru** and **Mexico**
- Strengthen effective **wetland conservation** efforts in Asia
- Search for 'lost' species in **Brazil, India, Russia, Samoa** and elsewhere

SIGNSTHETIDE ISALREADYTURNING...

Many threatened birds are disappearing fast. But there is hope. The BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme is already delivering active conservation. A small but significant number of species have stabilised due to existing conservation efforts. Since 2004, 88% of Critically Endangered birds have been receiving targeted conservation action. Our Partners, alongside other organisations, agencies and governments, are heavily involved in carrying out actions for 51% of these species. The great news is that at least 70% are benefiting from targeted conservation through reduced threats, leading to slower population declines, and even, in some cases, population increases.



INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS ARE TAKING THE LEAD

THE WORK OF SPECIES GUARDIANS



Central to the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme are our Species Guardians; individuals or organisations who take the lead in conserving globally threatened species in their country or region.



© Duncan Pritchard, BLSA

Priority is being given to the recruitment of Species Guardians for those globally threatened species most in need of attention. Guardians are monitoring the status of their species, implementing effective conservation action and regularly reporting their progress back to BirdLife International.

© Burung Indonesia



Their role is to take and encourage greater conservation action for their species, working with national and local governments, concerned individuals, organisations and local communities. BirdLife International is appointing and supporting organisations and individuals from across the world – leaders in their field willing to take on this new global challenge.

© MK Poulsen, BirdLife



In return, BirdLife provides Guardians with technical support, training, and the investment of funds for conservation action based on mutually agreed project plans. Guardians also receive support from BirdLife International that helps improve liaison with decision makers and governments. Our unique global structure, including regional program offices and in-country Partners, ensures that Species Guardians receive the full support they need to prevent their species from disappearing forever.



AT LAST, HOPE FOR THE MOST THREATENED BIRDS

THE BIRDLIFE PREVENTING EXTINCTIONS PROGRAMME IN ACTION



BELDING'S YELLOWTHROAT

This Mexican warbler, under threat from development, is already showing signs of benefiting from action taking place within its range in Baja California, Mexico by ProNatura Noroeste, the BirdLife Species Guardian. Working at one of the most important sites, the Guardian is researching and enhancing habitat and raising local awareness.

The British Birdwatching Fair is a Species Champion for Belding's Yellowthroat.



DWARF OLIVE IBIS

This species, along with the Critically Endangered São Tomé Fiscal and São Tomé Grosbeak, is endemic to São Tomé. The Associação dos Biólogos Santomenses (ABS) is the Species Guardian for all three species. ABS is campaigning for designation of protected areas, proposing suitable boundaries and raising awareness to safeguard the ibis from hunting.

The Peter Smith Trust is a Species Champion for Dwarf Olive Ibis.

DJIBOUTI FRANCOLIN

Djibouti Francolin is largely restricted to Forêt du Day, Djibouti. Houssein Rayaleh of Djibouti Nature, the Species Guardian, is working in collaboration with the World Pheasant Association. Djibouti Nature is advocating for Protected Area status, setting up a community-run juniper nursery, and developing a Site Support Group.

The British Birdwatching Fair is a Species Champion for Djibouti Francolin.

RESTINGA ANTWREN

This species has a very small range at Restinga de Maçambaba, Brazil. SAVE Brasil (BirdLife in Brazil), has appointed a local NGO at the site, Pingo D'Água, as the Species Guardian. It is carrying out biological surveys, assessing the complicated land ownership situation, launching an environmental awareness and education campaign, and promoting the establishment of a protected area.

Urs-Peter Stäuble is a Species Champion for Restinga Antwren.

AZORES BULLFINCH

This species is confined to native forest in the east of the island of São Miguel in the Azores. A steep decline caused by forest clearance means it is restricted to an extremely small range. The Species Guardian, Sociedade Portuguesa Para o Estudo Das Aves (SPEA, BirdLife in Portugal), is implementing a programme of habitat management, as well as working to raise public awareness and carrying out research and monitoring.

Birdwatch Magazine is a Species Champion for Azores Bullfinch.

WHITE-SHOULDERED IBIS

Occurring in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and East Kalimantan, Indonesia, this species is described as the most threatened large waterbird in South-East Asia. The Species Guardian is developing a proposal to establish a Protected Forest in Western Siem Pang, Cambodia. The government has been lobbied on the matter; while support has been given to a local conservation group and research and monitoring has been carried out.

in focus (the optical retailer) is a Species Champion for White-shouldered Ibis.

TAKE A STAND AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

THE ROLE OF SPECIES CHAMPIONS



As a BirdLife Species Champion you could provide a last hope for the world's most threatened birds.

BirdLife Species Champions are a growing community of companies, institutions and individuals that support the conservation we are coordinating throughout the world. They demonstrate their commitment to protecting the planet's natural heritage by funding the work undertaken by our Species Guardians.

Saving threatened birds from extinction is inevitably expensive and always takes time. The average annual cost for each project is over £20,000. We need to raise £19 million over the next five years by giving corporate and individual sponsors the unique

opportunity to donate and become a BirdLife Species Champion. Preventing extinction requires sustained investment, which is why we are asking all of our Species Champions to make a three-year commitment.

As well as providing the funding that will bring threatened birds back from the brink of extinction, Species Champions also help publicise the urgent need for action by drawing attention to the plight of the species they support and all the other threatened species the BirdLife Preventing Extinction Programme embraces.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Recruiting new BirdLife Species Champions is imperative. Many Critically Endangered species will simply not be with us in ten years time if conservation is not put in place for them soon.

You can support the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme at several different levels. Major donors can become a Species Champion for a Critically Endangered bird, or become a Programme Sponsor. It is also possible to become a BirdLife Species Champion, supporting the overall programme or make a donation as a programme supporter.

Any contribution, whatever size, makes a very real difference. Together, the many small donations we are already receiving from generous donors are collectively funding species recovery right now.



© Simon Fordham



THE KAKAPO RECOVERY PROGRAMME

Rio Tinto Alcan has recently been recruited as a BirdLife Species Champion for Kakapo, New Zealand's giant, flightless, nocturnal parrot. Rio Tinto has been working in partnership with the New Zealand Government Department of Conservation (DOC) and The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (BirdLife in New Zealand) to protect and nurture the tiny remnant population of the Critically Endangered Kakapo since 1990. BirdLife International was delighted to recognise Rio Tinto as Species Champion for Kakapo because of its long term support and recent commitment to continue funding the programme for a further three years.

European settlement, which brought predators such as rats, stoats and cats, devastated numbers after 1840. By 1995 there were only 51 individuals left, but the impetus provided by the Kakapo Recovery Programme meant that the population has now grown to at least 86, and there is cautious optimism that the species has a future. With a particular emphasis on scientific research, the plan is designed to increase breeding frequency, the productivity of nesting attempts and to determine why Kakapo breed so infrequently.

HOW THE MONEY IS SPENT

100% OF OUR CHAMPIONS' FUNDING IS USED WHERE IT MATTERS MOST

When an individual or organisation becomes a Species Champion they can be assured that their support is quickly channelled where it is needed most. Our promise is that every last penny will go towards preventing extinctions.

In addition to directly funding the work Species Guardians carry out on the ground, 30% of every champion's contribution helps BirdLife International's wider work preventing extinctions.

The harsh reality is that Species Champions are unlikely to step forward for every threatened bird in time. Accordingly, a percentage of every champion's contribution is collectively pooled to fund the protection of these 'orphaned' species. In this way we can put conservation in place for them where it is urgently needed but doesn't yet exist, before it's too late.

A small proportion is also used to fund the vital Science, Policy, Advocacy and Communications which underpin the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme enabling us to effectively coordinate and improve conservation around the globe. A small amount also funds the advertising necessary to attract new Species Champions and contributes to communications like this brochure and our web pages.

PLEASE ACT NOW AND SUPPORT US

Together we can reverse the tide of bird extinctions. Help us give otherwise condemned species a last chance to avoid becoming just a distant memory.

GET INVOLVED – AS A CHAMPION OR SUPPORTER

To find out more about how to become a BirdLife Species Champion or Preventing Extinctions Programme supporter please contact us today.

Send an email to: species.champions@birdlife.org

Call us on: **+44 (0)1223 277318**

Or write to us at:
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FOLLOWING OUR PROGRESS

You can keep up-to-date with the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme by visiting the news section of our website at www.birdlife.org/extinction. It is also possible to subscribe to specific news alerts there.

A SHARED VISION

We are the sum of our Partnership. The challenges we face together are huge but our resolve has never been greater. Every single person working with BirdLife International shares the same passion and vision – for a world rich in biodiversity, with people and nature living in harmony, fairly and sustainably.



Birdfair is Global Sponsor of the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme

The British Birdwatching Fair, or Birdfair as it is better known, has supported BirdLife International projects since its inception 20 years ago and has grown to become the world's largest birdwatching event. Birdfair became the first Global Programme Sponsor of the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme in 2007 and has committed its profit from the 2007, 2008 and 2009 events to help launch and take forward this vital initiative.

BirdLife wishes to acknowledge and thank the British Birdwatching Fair for their considerable support which has also enabled the compilation and publication of this brochure.

The presentation of material in this brochure and the geographical designations employed do not imply the expression or any opinion whatsoever on the part of BirdLife International concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. BirdLife International recognises that a dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom concerning the sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.

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