



World Migratory Bird Day



# 2023 Campaign Strategy



#WaterforBirds  
#WorldMigratoryBirdDay



# Key Information

## Theme

Importance of Water for Migratory Birds

## Key Dates

- IN MAI : Saturday, 13 May 2023
- IN OCTOBER : Saturday, 14 October 2023

## Slogan

ENGLISH **Water: Sustaining Bird Life!**  
ESPAÑOL **Agua: Vital para las aves!**  
FRANÇAIS **L'eau : Source de vie pour les oiseaux !**  
GERMAN **Wasser: Leben für Vögel!**

## Social Media



@WMBD



fb.com/worldmigratorybirdday



worldmigratorybirdday



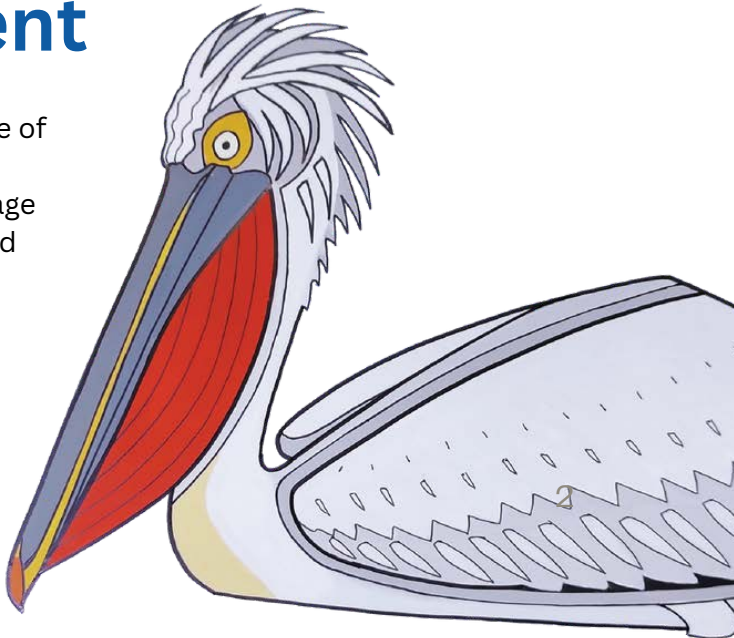
#worldmigratorybirdday  
#WMBD2023  
#WaterForBirds

## Website

[www.worldmigratorybirdday.org](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org)

# Aim of this document

This campaign strategy aims to support a wide range of stakeholders, including national and subnational governments, organizations, and individuals to engage in and strengthen awareness of World Migratory Bird Day 2023. It provides the basic guidance and key information needed for a coordinated global communications campaign.



# About World Migratory Bird Day

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) aims to raise awareness of migratory birds and issues related to their conservation. The campaign highlights the importance of international cooperation and encourages national and local actions to protect migratory birds and their habitats.

World Migratory Bird Day is organized by a collaborative partnership among two UN treaties - the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals ([CMS](#)) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement ([AEWA](#)), the non-profit organization, Environment for the Americas ([EFTA](#)), and the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership ([EAAFP](#)). The 2023 global campaign is also being actively supported by other dedicated organizations, including by [ICLEI](#) and BirdLife International ([BLI](#)).

The roots of World Migratory Bird Day can be traced back to 1993, when International Migratory Bird Day was created in the Americas to focus public attention on the need for international cooperation to conserve birds and habitats. In 2006, World Migratory Bird Day was initiated by CMS and AEWA, originally as a measure to counteract the negative publicity migratory birds were receiving across the world due to Avian Influenza. A decade later, in 2017, the two campaigns joined forces, and World Migratory Bird Day has now become a truly global effort. Past World Migratory Bird Day [themes](#) have focused on issues such as climate change, barriers to migration, illegal killing of birds, plastic and light pollution.



## A Two-Day Campaign

World Migratory Bird Day is the only international outreach campaign celebrated on two peak days each year to highlight the global phenomenon of bird migration.

Traditionally observed on the second Saturdays of May and October, the two days of World Migratory Bird Day are a way to reflect the cyclical nature of bird migration as well as the fact that there are varying peak migration periods in the northern and southern hemispheres. The two-day observance of World Migratory Bird Day also gives more people the chance to celebrate and raise awareness about migratory birds during peak migration times in different parts of the world.

# The Theme for WMBD 2023: Water

Water is fundamental to sustaining life on our planet. Virtually all migratory birds rely on water and its associated habitats at some point during their life cycles. Lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, wetlands, and coastal waters are all vital for feeding, drinking, or nesting, and as places to rest and refuel during long seasonal migrations.

Unfortunately, these aquatic ecosystems are becoming increasingly threatened around the world, and so are the migratory birds that depend on them. The increasing human demand for water, as well as pollution and climate change, is having a direct impact on the quantity and quality of water resources and on the conservation status of many migratory bird species.

Theme of  
WMBD 2023

**WATER:  
SUSTAINING  
BIRD LIFE**



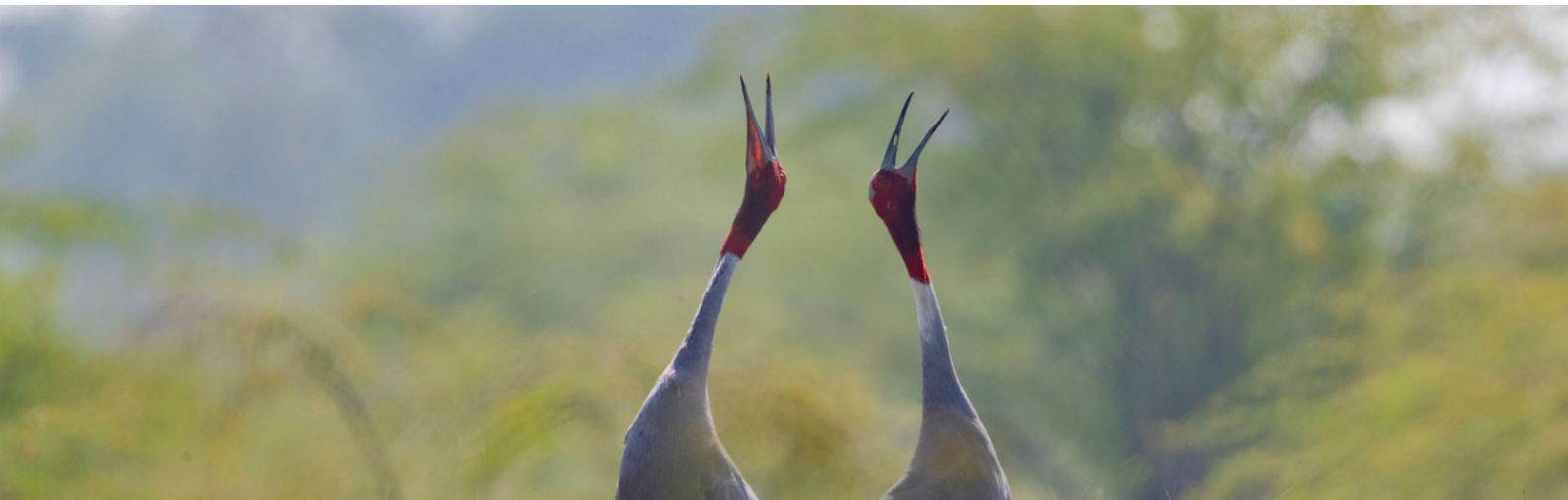
## Aim of the Campaign

- A key goal of WMBD 2023 is to raise awareness of the importance of water for migratory birds. Throughout the year, the campaign will focus on promoting stories and studies that showcase the multiple ways in which migratory birds depend on water for their survival.
- The campaign will serve as a platform to raise awareness and to encourage a wide range of actors from citizens to policymakers to sustainably use, restore and protect water resources and aquatic ecosystems – for the benefit of both migratory birds and people.
- The campaign will also encourage decision-makers to promote efficient water usage at all levels as well as other measures for sound water management. The campaign will encourage relevant actors to address the pollution of water both from direct sources and runoff.[1]

*[1] Direct sources (or point sources) are usually referred to as water pollution coming from pipes from factories going into a river, while indirect or runoff water pollution could be originating from agriculture or rainwater carrying urban runoff, etc.*

# WMBD 2023 Ambassador Birds

Compelling stories of 12 species of migratory birds showcase the importance of water to birds, highlighting the diversity of birds and ways in which they depend on healthy aquatic ecosystems. The selection includes birds that use one or more of the major flyway systems in the world and which will be featured as flagship species of the World Migratory Bird Day 2023 campaign. Please visit [this webpage](#) for an overview of all the species featured on the poster:



Atlantic Puffin



Maccoa Duck

Barn Swallow



Osprey

Black-capped Kingfisher



Rufous Hummingbird

Dalmatian Pelican



Sarus Crane

Dickcissel



Spoonbilled Sandpiper

European Turtle Dove



Wandering Albatross

# Key Messages

- **Water is fundamental to life on our planet.** Migratory birds and people need water to survive!
- **The vast majority of migratory birds rely on water during their life cycles.** Inland and coastal wetlands, rivers, lakes, streams, marshes, and ponds are all vital for feeding, drinking, or nesting, and as places to rest and refuel during their long journeys.
- **Aquatic ecosystems are increasingly threatened around the world** and so are the migratory birds that depend on them.
- **The increasing human demand for water, poor management, as well as pollution and climate change are the main threats.** They are having a direct impact on the quantity and quality of water available to migratory birds.
- **Water management deserves high-level political attention and needs concerted action across sectors.** Water management is a key element in sustainable development and vital for bird conservation.
- **International cooperation is essential** and necessary both for the conservation of migratory birds and for managing and protecting the world's water resources.



# Additional Key Messages

- **Water quality has a direct impact on the abundance and diversity of the food migratory birds need to survive.** These include insects and other invertebrates which are a major source of food for many migratory birds such as flycatchers, swallows and swifts.
- **Water is a key ingredient for the ecological connectivity of habitats important to migratory birds.** The ecological connectivity of the network of important habitats and stopover sites needs to be preserved.[2]

[2] An example of an important wetland site for migratory birds is Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania which is one of the top 10 stop-over sites in the AEWA Agreement area which is being threatened by urbanization and overfishing. The CMS definition of ecological connectivity as "the unimpeded movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on Earth" includes water flow as a natural process.



## Wetlands, Water and Birds

- Wetlands are essential to improve the quality of water needed by migratory birds. They naturally filter water, remove pollutants and boost the local water supply. Yet 35% of the world's wetlands have been lost since 1970 and nearly 90% have been degraded since the 1700s. We must step up our efforts to protect local wetlands and restore degraded ones.
- Conserving wetlands also enhances climate resilience (blue carbon). They provide nature-based solutions, i.e. protecting wetlands actually helps us combat against climate change.

## Pollution and Climate Change

- Climate Change is changing habitats, and altering the patterns of precipitation globally, which may impact migratory birds dramatically through extreme climate events such as drought, intense rainfall, early snowmelt.
- Climate Change is also leading to rising sea levels which is flooding the breeding habitats of many coastal migratory birds such as Spoon-billed Sandpiper.
- Plastic, toxic chemicals, and other pollutants such as lead shot are contaminating our rivers, lakes, and oceans, directly and indirectly affecting migratory birds.

## Political Action

- Water management deserves high-level political attention and needs concerted action across sectors. Protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes are an essential part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Water also serves as an enabler for sustainable development and is a vital element for bird conservation.



# Quality vs Quantity of Water

The campaign will look at both the quantity and quality of water as it relates to migratory birds and highlighting habitat loss, pollution (including from lead and plastic) and the impacts of climate change as well as other anthropogenic impacts on water.



## The main threats to water management that affect migratory birds include:

- **Habitat loss and fragmentation:** Wetlands, rivers, and lakes are essential habitats for migratory birds, but these habitats are often lost or degraded due to human activities such as land-use change, urbanization, poor management and water pollution.
- **Water pollution:** Polluted water can harm birds and their food sources, as well as reducing the availability of clean water for drinking and bathing.
- **Poor management and overuse of water resources** can lead to the degradation of wetlands and other important habitats for migratory birds. The diversion of water for hydroelectric power generation can also alter water flows and levels, which can also negatively effect migratory birds and their habitats.
- **Climate change:** Climate change is causing multiple changes affecting the availability of water. Climate change is exacerbating the global water crisis by altering precipitation patterns, increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, and causing sea level rise – all of which have significant effects on migratory birds and the habitats they need to survive.

## On a global policy level actions for good water management that will benefit migratory birds include:

- **Protecting and restoring wetlands and other water habitats:** This includes preserving important habitats and restoring degraded ones and addressing water uses to ensure availability for migratory birds and other wild species.
- **Regulating water quality:** Implementing and enforcing regulations to prevent pollution and maintain good water quality.
- **Implementing sustainable water management practices:** This includes reducing water waste, promoting water conservation, and implementing sustainable water use practices.

**In terms of WATER QUALITY,** good water management practices help to reduce pollution of water sources, including reducing agricultural and industrial runoff, implementing and enforcing stricter environmental regulations and improving wastewater treatment.

**In terms of WATER QUANTITY,** good water management practices should always aim to balance the competing demands for water from human activities (e.g., agriculture, energy) and wildlife.



# Take Action!

## How Governments and Companies Can Help

- **Improve habitat for migratory birds in aquatic ecosystems.** Help maintain healthy bird populations by implementing conservation measures such as area-based protections, restoration, protection of nesting areas and reducing pollution.
- **Restore and Protect Wetlands.** Countries must collectively step up their efforts to protect local wetlands and restore degraded ones.
- **Identify, monitor and adequately manage aquatic ecosystems.**
- **Adopt and implement laws and regulations aimed at conserving and protecting water resources.**
- **Implement the decisions or international treaties related to water** – including those of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). These include decisions relating to reducing lead shot and other forms of pollutants out of wetlands and resolutions related to climate change.
- **Add water and aquatic ecosystem conservation as an item in your companies' environmental/ESG policy.**
- Encourage your company staff to take part in wetland protection activities (see individual actions below)
- Donate to organizations who are engaged in wetland conservation.

## How Individuals Can Help

- **Stop polluting water!** Help keep the world's water bodies clean. Dispose of waste, including plastic waste properly. Don't put toxic waste, oils, medicines and chemicals down the toilet or drains.
- **Save water!** Never let the water run wastefully. Shut off the faucet while brushing your teeth, take shorter showers instead of baths, wash only full loads of laundry, and consider using a dishwasher instead of hand washing. These tweaks to your daily routine may seem insignificant, but they can help save thousands of gallons of water a month.
- **Engage in and use citizen science to monitor the presence of migratory birds** in and around the various water bodies to help justify and better target conservation measures.
- **Plant a native garden.** Lawns are unnatural and high maintenance, but flowers, grasses, and shrubs native to your area are adapted to thrive without frequent watering. They are also better for the soil and provide food and habitat for birds and other wildlife. Avoid hard paving to allow water to permeate into the ground and help reduce surface run-off and flooding.
- **Keep the water clean.** Never litter—poorly managed trash ends up in our waterways. Use fewer chemicals and fertilizers in your yard. And consider joining clean-up activities in your area, at beaches or along rivers. Take part in clean-ups of local rivers, lakes, wetlands or beaches.
- **Raise your voice and get involved locally and globally.** Write to your elected representative about ways to improve water quality and restore wetlands. Work with community leaders to find ways to address water conservation challenges in your area. Support local initiatives to protect wetlands and other critical habitats for migratory birds and people. Talk or write to your political and community leaders to highlight the importance of protecting and restoring wetlands for both people and birds.
- **Learn more about migratory birds and water.** Visit a wetland in your area and observe the birds that are using it. Consult World Migratory Bird Day materials and other resources to learn more about the importance of water for birds. Share your observations and findings with others to maximize awareness of aquatic habitats and their value to migratory birds and our planet.
- **Add your event to the global event map.** The World Migratory Bird Day [global map](#) shows what events are taking place around the world to mark World Migratory Bird Day. Each of these events is an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of water for migratory birds and to encourage community involvement in water conservation efforts. Here is the link to [REGISTER](#).

# Help Spread the Word!

- Help promote the campaign. Please help spread the word about World Migratory Bird Day by announcing it on your own website, newsletters and via your social media channels. Share information about World Migratory Bird Day and this year's theme to your contacts and networks. Use your networks and channels to tell others about the importance of water to migratory birds. Please use the resources on our [website](#) and in our social media pack for this purpose. And whenever you do, please make sure to use the main hashtags: #WorldMigratoryBirdDay and #WMBD2023 and #WaterForBirds
- Send in a statement. As every year, we would be delighted to receive statements to mark World Migratory Bird Day 2023. These could either be short (1-2 minute) video messages or written statements (maximum of 800 words) which we will be sharing on social media and via our website. Please send your statements to: [contact@worldmigratorybirdday.org](mailto:contact@worldmigratorybirdday.org)

Get  
inspired and  
**ORGANIZE  
YOUR OWN  
WMBD 2023  
EVENT!**



## Organize an Event!

- Every World Migratory Bird Day event is unique, and as diverse and creative as the people and organizations involved. United by a common theme and campaign, World Migratory Bird Day events take place in all corners of the world and involve and inspire thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds. While events are usually organized on one of the two peak days of World Migratory Bird Day, events can be linked to World Migratory Bird Day throughout the year.
- There are really no limits on creativity! A successful World Migratory Bird Day event often gets people outside, engages them in learning about birds and habitats, and equips them to take conservation action. WMBD events usually promote the conservation theme, contribute to raising awareness or encourage people to take action. Past activities and awareness-raising events have included bird-watching tours, educational workshops and exhibitions, webinars, festivals, and painting competitions, which have been organized at schools, parks, town halls, education centres and nature reserves.
- Visit the website [to be inspired by past events](#) and once you know what you want to do – please make sure to [register your activity](#) so that it can appear on the global World Migratory Bird Day event map.

## CONTACT

**For more information about the global campaign, and specific information about the campaign in the African-Eurasian flyway please contact:**

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