

Updates on

# African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP)<sup>1</sup>

June – July 2016

## Topics in this update:

1. Addressing illegal killing of birds receives a major boost
2. World Migratory Birds Day celebrations marked
3. Yellow-breasted Bunting surveys conducted at last!
4. Securing the future for AEMLAP flagships
5. Our hands are open: SAFRING
6. The West African Land Use Workshop

We welcome short articles related to conservation work and research on migratory landbirds. The updates are currently produced once every two months.

## 1. Addressing illegal killing of birds receives a major boost

The threat of illegal killing of birds, especially in the Mediterranean region, has recently received global attention. From regional assessments conducted by BirdLife International, the vice accounts for loss of millions of birds, including migratory landbirds, every year. In an effort to address this issue, the first Meeting of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean, constituted under the auspices of CMS, was held from 12 to 15th July 2016 in Cairo, Egypt. At the meeting, governments and observers agreed on the need for stricter penalties, increased surveillance and improved law enforcement, committing to a zero tolerance approach to curb to the killing of birds in the Mediterranean. They adopted the Cairo



<sup>1</sup> AEMLAP is a UNEP/CMS instrument for action to improve conservation status of migratory landbirds; see [www.cms.int](http://www.cms.int) for more info

Declaration on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean Region.

For more info visit: <http://www.cms.int/en/taskforce/mikt>

## 2. World Migratory Bird Day 2016 (WMBD) marked

The Day was marked from the month of May with people from different walks of life participating. According to CMS website, a total of 318 events were registered. This year's event was themed on stopping the illegal killing, taking and trade which affects many species of migratory landbirds listed in AEMLAP. The events helped to spread the word about the grave threat facing migratory and other birds in general.

For more information about the events see: <http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/>

## 3. Yellow-breasted Bunting (YBB) surveys conducted at last!



The much needed field surveys for YBB was finally conducted in June in Mongolia this year. It was organized by the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia (WSCC) through a team of volunteers. The team worked through northern and eastern Mongolia searching for YBBs for two weeks. The survey was scheduled to coincide with the arrival of birds at their breeding grounds and period. YBBs were located at eight locations and around 30 territorial males and 7 females with males were recorded during the survey.

One team caught and banded one territorial male bunting with color and metal rings. Riverine willow habitats are the most common breeding sites for YBBs in Mongolia. However, almost in all locations surveyed, along the Kherlen, Onon, Yuruu, and Kharaa Rivers, the vegetation was heavily overgrazed and looked to be unfit habitat for nesting of YBBs. WSCC hopes to organize another survey next year to other potential areas and revisit to some promising sites found this year.

For further details contact: [nyambayar@wsc.org.mn](mailto:nyambayar@wsc.org.mn) or [batmunkh@wsc.org.mn](mailto:batmunkh@wsc.org.mn)

## 4. Securing the future for AEMLAP flagships

Plans to compile an international action plan on the conservation of **Yellow-breasted Bunting** (YBB) (and the Rustic Bunting - known to be declining at a rapid rate in recent years) are underway. An international workshop on conservation of the YBB will be convened at Sun Yat-sen University of Guangzhou, China (2nd-4th November 2016) where the drafting of the plan will

be furthered. A similar exercise will be conducted at the Japan Ornithological Society Meeting in Sapporo, Hokkaido (16-19th September 2016). The Japanese experts will also discuss conservation priorities of this species. Global populations of this species have greatly reduced over the last thirty years. BirdLife is supporting Birds Russia to conduct YBB surveys in Sakhalin. No YBBs have been found in southern Sakhalin so far.

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China revised her Wildlife Conservation Law in July and will come into force from 2017. The revised law forbids consumption of protected species as food. The revised list of protected species will be released and it is expected that YBB will feature as one of nationally protected species. This is really good news!

For more info contact: [simba.chan@birdlife.org](mailto:simba.chan@birdlife.org)

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The development of international single species action plan processes for the **European Roller** (ER) and the **European Turtle-dove** (TD) have agreed to synergize. Two workshops for the TD planning will take place in December in Spain and the second one will be held back to back with one on ER in January 2017 in Hungary. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is leading the development of the plan for TD while Hungarian Ornithological and Nature Conservation Society (MME) for ER. Both plans will follow CMS action planning formats and are being financed through separate EU LIFE+ grants.

For more details contact: [ian.fisher@rspb.org.uk](mailto:ian.fisher@rspb.org.uk) and [tokody.bela@mme.hu](mailto:tokody.bela@mme.hu)

## 5. Our hands are open: SAFRING

The South African Ringing Scheme (SAFRING), based at the University of Cape Town, indicates that their database is freely available via Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). The process of cleaning the data is, however, ongoing and special requests, especially for updated data, can be made.

For further details, contact: Dieter Oschadleus([doschadleus@gmail.com](mailto:doschadleus@gmail.com)) - the SAFRING Coordinator

## 6. Date set for the West African Land Use Workshop

The Nigerian Government will host the upcoming West African Land Use Workshop to be held on 24 – 25th November, in Abuja. The agenda will be focused on identifying shared land use change priorities in the region and how more sustainable land management could be achieved with development partners. Key outputs will include a resolution for CMS COP12 and a declaration for adoption by other relevant institutions and processes to benefit migratory landbirds. Formal

invites will be out soon, and there will be focus on 'non-usual' stakeholders with expertise in land use change in West Africa.

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## 7. Other information

- Visit <http://migrantlandbirds.org/> for more on research about migratory landbirds.
- The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2016 will take place on 3rd – 10th September in Hawai'i, USA.
- The 20th European Bird Census Council, meeting will take place on 5 – 9th September 2016 in Halle (Salle), Germany.
- The African Congress for Conservation Biology (Society of Conservation Biology, SCB) will be held on 10 – 15th October 2016 at the University of Chaouib Doukkali, El Jadida, Morocco.
- The 14th Pan African Ornithological Congress (PAOC) will be held in Dakar, Senegal on 17-21st October, 2016.
- The 45th Meeting of the CMS Standing Committee will take place on 9 – 10th November 2016 in Bonn, Germany.
- The 13th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will be held on 5 – 17th in December 2016 in Cancun, Mexico.

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