



World Migratory Bird Day

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“Networking for migratory birds”

11 May 2013



Regional World Migratory Bird Day Event

Lake Elementaita, Kenya

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To celebrate World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) on 11 May this year, the *Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)* will host a regional WMBD event on the shores of Lake Elementaita to raise awareness about the need to conserve the migratory birds and their habitats.

World Migratory Bird Day is commemorated in every continent, connecting people and cultures around the globe in the same respect that migratory birds do on their journeys each year. However, the impacts of people around world have led to habitat loss and degradation, greatly affecting many migratory bird species. The survival of migratory birds depends on the availability of well-connected networks of habitats along their migration routes for breeding, feeding, resting and wintering.

The 2013 World Migratory Bird Day Theme - “Networking for migratory birds”

This year’s World Migratory Bird Day theme **“Networking for migratory birds”** aims to emphasize both ecological networks, as well as networks between organizations and individuals and their mutual importance for the long-term conservation of migratory birds. Since migration routes often cross many countries and even entire continents, an effective management strategy requires joint action in the form of international cooperation. Collective conservation actions by governments, nature conservation organizations, scientists and the general public are needed to ensure the survival of migratory birds.

World Migratory Bird Day 2013 - Regional Kenyan Event at Lake Elementaita

Lake Elementaita is an important site for migratory birds and is the venue for this year’s regional World Migratory Bird Day 2013 event in Kenya that will take place on **11 May 2013** starting at **9:00am**.

The event is being hosted by the government of Kenya through *Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)*, the focal point of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) in collaboration with the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement Secretariat (UNEP/AEWA) and with funding from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

This event will be preceded by a five days International Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on the flyway approach to the conservation and wise use of waterbirds and wetlands taking place from 6 – 10 May 2013 at the Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (KWSTI) in Naivasha, Kenya. The training targets participants from Eastern and Southern African countries and will use the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) Flyway Training Kit as a central training resource. The ToT workshop and the WMBD event, both contribute to the implementation of priority awareness-raising activities as identified by the AEWA African Parties in the recently adopted AEWA Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017.

Lake Elementaita

Lake Elementaita, important for numerous migratory waterbirds including the near threatened Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*), is a shallow alkaline lake lying on the floor of the Great Rift Valley at 1,776 m above sea level. Although the lake and a terrestrial buffer zone cover an area of about 108.8 km², the size of the open water body fluctuates between 19 km² and 22km². It was designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA) in 1999 and as a Ramsar site in 2005. It was, however, not until 2010 that Lake Elementaita was proclaimed as a National Wildlife Sanctuary. The Wildlife Sanctuary encompasses the whole of Lake Elementaita and its surrounding riparian lands. In 2011, Lake Elementaita, Lake Nakuru and Lake Bogoria were inscribed by UNESCO as part of the Kenya Lakes System in the Great Rift Valley World Heritage Site.

Many human activities directly or indirectly damage sites through habitat fragmentation and degradation thereby posing a grave threat to migratory bird species. These important habitats are disappearing and with them the ecological networks that connect them. With limited access to these important sites like Lake Elementaita, birds may not survive their demanding journeys. Consequently, the management of ecological networks is crucial for the protection of avian migratory species. Lake Elementaita's status as a national Wildlife Sanctuary, IBA and Ramsar site as well as being part of the Great Rift Valley World Heritage Site shows the site's great importance as a wilderness conservation area. These protection statuses will help conserve Lake Elementaita's great environmental resources, including migratory birds, for generations to come.

What is World Migratory Bird Day?

Launched in 2006 on the edge of the Great Rift Valley in Laikipia (Kenya) - World Migratory Bird Day is an annually celebrated awareness-raising campaign aiming to inspire the worldwide conservation of both migratory birds and their habitats. The campaign is organized by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA); two international wildlife treaties administered by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). World Migratory Bird Day is also supported by a growing number of partners, such as BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC).

Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in collaboration with a number of national stakeholders including the National Museums of Kenya, Kenya Forest Service, National Environment Management Authority among other including Nature Kenya and Soysambu Conservancy will be hosting the regional WMBD event on 11 May 2013 at Lake Elementaita, Kenya.

For more information about the WMBD event at Lake Elementaita, please visit the KWS website at: <http://www.kws.org/>

For more information about World Migratory Bird Day, please visit the website at: www.worldmigratorybirdday.org

We look forward to celebrating World Migratory Bird Day 2013 with you!

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