



## Species e-Bulletin

News from the IUCN Species Survival Commission and the IUCN Species Programme

August 2010

The monthly e-Bulletin supplements [Species](#), the published newsletter of the Species Programme and the SSC. It aims to keep staff, members and the wider IUCN network up-to-date with Species news and announcements. 2009 issues are available on the [Species homepage](#).

### Headline News

#### **African freshwater species threatened - livelihoods at stake**

Twenty-one per cent of freshwater species in continental Africa are threatened with extinction, putting the livelihoods of millions of people at risk. With so much to lose, inland waters must be managed not just for their supply of freshwater but also to sustain the abundant life within. In the most comprehensive assessment of its kind, 5,167 African freshwater species were evaluated by 200 scientists over a five-year period for the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, including all known freshwater fish, molluscs, crabs, dragonflies and damselflies, and selected families of aquatic plants. Some of the biggest threats to African freshwater species come from agriculture, water abstraction, dams and invasive alien species. This study highlights the perilous state of our natural environment and will provide vital information for decision-makers as they plan to greatly expand the use of Africa's inland water resources. The results are particularly important for resource managers as, for the first time, species have been mapped to individual river basins. [Full story](#) | [photos](#) | [Freshwater biodiversity Initiative](#) (Red List website)

#### **Catastrophic forest fire delivers huge blow to Europe's rarest seabird**

A massive forest fire on the island of Madeira has killed several breeding adults and 65% of this year's chicks of [Zino's Petrel](#) (Endangered). BirdLife International and SPEA (BirdLife in Portugal) have launched an urgent appeal for funds to carry out emergency conservation work needed before the winter sets in. Zino's Petrel *Pterodroma madeira* is Europe's rarest seabird and one of the rarest birds in the world, nesting only on a few mountain ledges in the rugged central massif of Madeira island. Once on the edge of extinction with numbers down to a few tens of pairs, intense conservation action over the past 20 years, led by the Natural Park of Madeira (Parque Natural da Madeira - PNM) with support from SPEA, the Freira Conservation Project and Funchal Municipal Museum, has seen its population grow to almost 80 pairs. In recent weeks, forest fires have ravaged parts of Madeira, including the Zino's Petrel breeding colony, where many nestlings were still in their burrows. [Full details](#)

#### **IUCN's alarm call for Eurasian steppes**

Growing threats to Eurasian steppes such as climate change, land-use change, overgrazing, hunting and mining will be the focus of an international conference organized by IUCN from 9 to 12 September in the Hustai National Park in Mongolia. The meeting will be attended by experts on natural grasslands but also by politicians and people that rely on steppes in their everyday lives, such as pastoralists. [Full story](#)

#### **Search for lost amphibians**

Teams of scientists around the world have launched an unprecedented search in the hope of rediscovering 100 species of "lost" amphibians – animals considered potentially extinct but that may be holding on in a few remote places – Conservation International and the IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group has announced. This search, which is taking place in 14 countries on five continents, is the first

ever coordinated effort to find such a large number of "lost" creatures and comes as global amphibian populations are suffering a shocking decline – with more than 30 per cent of all species threatened with extinction. [Full story](#)

### **World Heritage goes marine – Hawai'i and Phoenix Islands Added**

Six new natural sites were inscribed on the World Heritage List at the 34th World Heritage Committee meeting in Brasilia in August. The Committee also updated its List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. As the Advisory Body on natural sites to UNESCO, IUCN conducted thorough expert evaluation missions to candidate sites throughout the year, and presented its recommendations to the World Heritage Committee. Papahānaumokuākea of Hawai'i, the Phoenix Islands Protected Areas of Kiribati, the Central Highlands of Sri Lanka, the exceptional landscapes of La Réunion Island, Russia's Putorana Plateau in Siberia, and the sandstone zones of China Danxia have been added to the World Heritage List. Two existing natural sites were extended following IUCN's advice: Monte San Giorgio, from Switzerland to Italy, and Pirin National Park in Bulgaria. [Full story](#)

### **Rare water lily species protected by the Royal Thai Government**

IUCN Thailand has been working for three years to achieve national recognition of the endemic and threatened water lily *Crinum thaianum*. Now, the tireless efforts of the team, led by Thailand Programme Manager Somsak Soonthornnawaphat, have paid off. The species has gone from oblivion to national recognition as among the 10 most rare and endangered plants and animals in Thailand that need protection and funding. The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) recognized the species as an endangered plant that needs better protection. ONEP declared that the water lily's extinction can only be prevented by protecting both the species and its habitat. [Full story](#)

### **IUCN expanding Red List in Brazil**

IUCN and the Instituto Chico Mendes para conservação da biodiversidade (ICMBio) have signed an agreement to build the Brazilian Red List of Threatened Species. Brazil is a mega-biodiverse country and the status of its species is an important barometer at the global level. ICMBio is the official assessor of species for the Brazilian Ministry of Environment. So far however, Red List data for Brazil does not cover comprehensively all species and does not yield data that could be easily compared internationally. Through this agreement, IUCN will bring training and capacity building to ICMBio on a new methodology to assess the status of species and biodiversity in Brazil. [Full story](#)

### **Biodiversity and Protected Areas Task Force**

This new joint task force brings together members of IUCN's two largest Commissions: SSC and WCPA. Under the co-Chairmanship of Thomas Brooks and Stephen Woodley, the task force has two initial objectives. The first objective on biodiversity outcomes is to conduct a meta-study on the effectiveness of different IUCN categories and governance types (of protected areas) in delivering biodiversity outcomes, drawing on available long-term data from protected areas around the world (and comparable data from outside protected areas where available). A further objective will focus on consolidating the global standards for the identification of sites of biodiversity conservation significance ("key biodiversity areas") and the development of a comprehensive set of guidelines for measuring the biodiversity conservation significance of sites. Click here for [more info](#)

### **Rothschild's giraffe joins list of species threatened by extinction**

The Rothschild's giraffe is the latest charismatic African mammal to be declared "Endangered" by IUCN, adding to the growing number of species under threat of extinction. The recent analysis by Fennessy and Brenneman 2010 indicates that the Rothschild's populations are in peril. There are currently nine recognised giraffe sub-species and the Rothschild's is the second most imperiled, with fewer than 670 individuals remaining in the wild. Historically ranging across western Kenya, Uganda, and southern Sudan, it has been almost totally eliminated from most of its former range and now survives in only a few small and isolated populations in Kenya and Uganda. [Full story](#)

### **Trapping for food threatens rare Asian bird**

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper, one of the world's most threatened birds, is rapidly heading towards extinction because young birds are being targeted for human consumption. Spoon-billed Sandpipers nest only in the far north-east of Russia. In 2000, around 1,000 breeding pairs were known, but by 2009, the number had plummeted to just 120–220 pairs, a decline of 88%. During that time, adult survival appeared unchanged and breeding success was reasonable, but the recruitment of young birds back into the adult population was zero in all but one of the years studied. Now an international team of scientists has discovered the apparent reason behind the dramatic decline having located around 200

Spoon-billed Sandpipers—the majority of the world population—wintering in Myanmar, most of them in the Bay of Martaban where local people target wading birds for food. [Full story](#)

### **Keeping the giant catfish in Thailand's Mekong River**

There were roast chickens and rice, pig's heads and beer – all borne in a solemn procession as offerings to an unlikely recipient, the [Mekong giant catfish](#). “Please accept our wishes to live in harmony, fish with humans,” intoned an official standing before a catfish statue raised high on a bamboo altar. It wasn't so long ago that the giant catfish was the target of an annual hunt that left the species critically endangered. But in June 2006, after two years of negotiations with local environmentalists, IUCN, WWF Thailand and Thailand's Department of Fisheries, the fishers of northern Thailand's Chiang Khong declared an end to giant catfish catching. In place of the hunt, Chiang Khong has launched an annual giant catfish festival coinciding with the Buddhist New Year festivities. [Full story](#)

## **Specialist Group & Species Programme News**

### **Medicinal Plants - new film shows how communities benefit from sustainable plant harvest**

A new video showcases how village forest communities implementing sustainable harvesting of wild medicinal and aromatic plants benefit local livelihoods and help conserve natural resources that would otherwise be at risk of over-exploitation. The film follows a field project in Karnataka, India, where the recently developed International Standard for the Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP) was field tested. The Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT), India, (now renamed IAIM, the Institute for Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine) helped develop the methodology and the management plan for the field sites in the Agumbe Range in Shimoga and the Katgal Range in Honnavara. The field project drew heavily on traditional knowledge of the local community, and combined this with techniques to ensure sustainability of supplies. [Story and film](#)

### **Antelopes**

*Gnusletter*, Vol 29, n°1, August 2010. This Special Edition of *Gnusletter* represents a unique cross section of the Antelope Specialist Group (ASG) membership. Working in diverse regions in Africa and Asia, the bios and reports provided here by 26 ASG members places an important face on the ASG's antelope research, management and conservation efforts. From rainforest to desert, mountain plateau's and grass plains, the diversity of antelopes is well represented by these ASG members, describing their work in their own words – fascinating reading! Available for download [here](#).

### **Crocodiles**

CSG Newsletter, vol.29, no.2 April-June 2010 [here](#)

### **Sharks – mini Red List Workshop to catch newly described species**

The Shark Specialist Group held a workshop at the Sharks International Conference in Cairns in June to begin the Red List assessment of a number of recently described species (or those species whose taxonomy has recently changed) [report here](#)

### **Cranes**

The Crane SG convened a workshop “Climate -- Cranes -- People” from 28 May to 3 June at Muraviovka Park in far eastern Russia. The workshop examined (1) cranes and agriculture and (2) cranes, wetlands and climate change. Thirty participants from 14 countries (five continents) attended. Participants found common themes from around the world and a diversity of strategies for reducing conflicts. The Crane SG will be developing a publication on Cranes and Agriculture in the next two years. The greatest threat from climate change comes from diminishing water supply, often caused indirectly as humans modify natural hydrology of crane habitats. We will develop a practical overview and guide for securing water resources for cranes, other waterbirds of conservation concern, their key habitats, and associated species (by 2012), as well as a separate summary of knowledge and experience on cranes and climate change (format to be determined). Contact Chair Jim Harris [harris@savingcranes.org](mailto:harris@savingcranes.org)

### **Final IUCN report of the CITES CoP15 meeting, Doha**

The finalized documents are now published on the CITES CoP15 website. IUCN representative at the meeting, Dena Cator, has finalized her report of the meeting, tailoring it to the issues that IUCN and its SSC Specialist Groups were most involved in. Thanks to Dena for this clear, comprehensive and easy to read record (incorporating all final documents and discussions through links). [Pdf file here](#)

### **Staff changes within the Species Programme**

The team led by Kent Carpenter based in Virginia USA has been renamed the Marine Biodiversity Unit (MBU) with Kent as the Manager.

We welcome Elise Jueni as Administrative Assistant in Gland. Elise has several years experience within IUCN HQ having worked in both the Business & Biodiversity and Marine programme units as well as within the Finance dept and so she is a great addition to the team. View the [SP staff organigram](#) here.

## Announcements

### **Kenton Miller Award for Innovation in Protected Areas Management - Deadline for nominations 30 November 2010**

The Kenton Miller Award is now open for nominations. The award will be presented at the George Wright Society biennial conference, New Orleans, USA, 14-18 March 2011. Nominations can be given in French, English and Spanish and all nominations received before the 30 November will be reviewed. [More information](#), application criteria and nominations.

### **Job Vacancy**

Programme Officer, Conservation Planning. IUCN Species Programme, Cambridge UK. Click [here](#) for details. Closing date 10 September.

### **Curso Internacional Sobre Rehabilitación, Investigación y Conservación de Tortugas Marinas, Montevideo, Uruguay, 23 – 27 Noviembre, 2010**

Organiza: Karumbé Auspicia: Marine Turtle Specialist Group/IUCN & SWOT [Mayores informaciones](#): Luciana Alonso (Karumbé) [karumbemail@gmail.com](mailto:karumbemail@gmail.com)

### **SYMBAMPALM - First International Symposium on Genetic Resources of Bamboos and Palms and Third International Symposium on Ornamental Palms, Campinas (SP), Brazil, 21-25 November 2010. [Information here](#)**

### **100 actions for Biodiversity – the Guardian**

Guillaume Chapron, member of several SSC Specialist Groups, is compiling a list of 100 actions that if implemented would have an immediate effect to slow down biodiversity loss in G20 countries. Supported by the newspaper The Guardian the list will be presented to governments before the next CBD summit in October. He is looking for actions that are (1) contributing to the safeguard of a particular endangered species or ecosystem, (2) politically costly to implement or opposed by some interest groups, (3) strongly and widely supported by peer-reviewed scientific evidence. These actions should also be 'smart' i.e. Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. Can you or your colleagues participate in selecting the best set of actions? [More info](#) here or contact [guillaume.chapron@biodiversity100.org](mailto:guillaume.chapron@biodiversity100.org)

### **Memorium: Ken Hill (1948-2010)**

The IUCN/SSC Cycad Specialist Group is sad to report that Ken Hill died on 4<sup>th</sup> August in Sydney, Australia, after a long illness. Ken had been a member of the Cycad Specialist Group from its early years and was very active during the 1990's when he worked on revisions of the Asian and Australian cycad floras. He was an excellent field botanist and systematist and his extensive fieldwork resulted in the description of > 50 new cycad species. As a result of his intimate knowledge of Asian and Australian cycads, Ken took the lead in Red Listing these groups for the 2003 IUCN/ SSC Cycad Status Survey and Action Plan. He also initiated the Cycad Pages website, which has become an important source of information for scientists, enthusiasts and law enforcement agencies, and he was one of the compilers of the World List of Cycads, an authoritative list of accepted nomenclature that is updated every three years. We are fortunate that Ken has left us with a rich legacy of cycad papers and books that reflect his great contribution to our knowledge of this group of plants. Ken made many friends amongst his colleagues and his quiet wisdom and advice were greatly valued. Even when he became ill and was unable to work, he continued to make contributions and was regularly consulted on issues relating to cycad taxonomy and conservation. His great bearded presence will be sorely missed and we extend our condolences to his family.

## Publications

### **IUCN August Science Bulletin**

The August 2010 edition of the IUCN Science Bulletin, is now available [here](#). This Bulletin provides a

quick overview of the recent peer-reviewed literature relevant to IUCN's programme. It is not intended as an exhaustive reflection of what is happening in conservation science but rather to stimulate further exploration of science relevant to IUCN's Programme.

### **UNEP-WCMC World Atlases**

Now available online for the first time, Atlas links as follows: [Seagrasses](#) || [Coral reefs](#) || [Coral reefs \(German\)](#) || [Biodiversity](#) || [Great apes](#) || [Great apes \(French\)](#)

### **Eastern chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes schweinfurthii*): status survey and conservation action plan 2010-2020, IUCN Gland**

The eastern chimpanzee is classified as Endangered and of global conservation concern. This publication offers a 10-year plan which, if fully implemented, will go a long way to ensuring the maintenance of viable populations of the eastern chimpanzee across much of its existing range. Chimpanzees are excellent flagship and umbrella species for conservation; protecting their populations and habitat protects innumerable other species. [Order or download pdf here](#)

### **Species and climate change**

Climate change is set to be one of the major drivers of species extinctions in the 21st century: approximately 20 to 30 per cent of plant and animal species are likely to be at increasingly high risk as global mean temperatures rise. But which species will suffer the most? Which species, ecosystems and regions should we prioritize for conservation? A recent IUCN report identifies 10 species that are most vulnerable to climate change. Find out what they are and learn what threats they face: [Arctic Foxes](#) | [Clownfish](#) | [Koalas](#) | [Emperor Penguins](#) | [Leatherback Turtles](#) | [Staghorn Corals](#) | [Ringed Seals](#) | [Quiver Trees](#) | [Salmon](#) | [Beluga Whales](#)

## **Other IUCN News**

### **IUCN Global Marine Program goes Polar**

IUCN's Global Marine Program is taking the lead for IUCN on all polar issues and so will now be known as the Global Marine and Polar Program (GMPP). The GMPP will continue to be the programmatic lead on all marine issues inside national jurisdictions as well as areas beyond national jurisdiction. The overall coordinator of the IUCN polar programmes will be Thomas Laughlin, Deputy Head of GMPP. GMPP Arctic and Antarctic activities for 2010 – 2011 include work on ecosystem-based management in the Arctic marine environment. GMPP will represent IUCN at Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings; meetings of the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) and at meetings related to proposals to designate the Ross Sea as a Marine Protected Area (MPA). [More info](#) on specific projects and key contacts in English, French and Spanish.

### **Marine News Issue 7 August 2010**

*Marine News* is the IUCN Global Marine and Polar Programme e-newsletter. The 7<sup>th</sup> issue, released at the end of August 2010, includes news stories related to a diversity of marine-related topics such as climate change mitigation and adaptation, threatened marine species, energy and industry, marine protected areas, marine invasive species, fisheries and aquaculture, ocean governance, and the Arctic marine environment. It also features recent marine expeditions and outstanding marine photographs. [Download here](#)

### **Comment conserver les récifs de la Mer Rouge haut en couleur**

La Mer Rouge héberge l'un des systèmes de récifs de coraux les plus riches qui comme presque tous les autres récifs au monde, subit les effets du changement climatique. Le blanchiment des coraux menace non seulement les récifs, mais aussi le tourisme et les pêcheries qui en dépendent. Plus d'un million de personnes viennent plonger en Mer Rouge chaque année (ce qui représentait la majeure partie des 7.8 milliards de dollars US de revenus touristiques de l'Égypte l'année passée), mais le changement climatique est une menace grandissante pour l'industrie du tourisme, réduisant ainsi l'attractivité de cette destination et mettant en péril des ressources financières indispensables. Pour développer des actions à même de réduire les impacts futurs sur les coraux et le tourisme marin, il est essentiel d'augmenter la prise de conscience des menaces pesant sur les récifs par les tours opérateurs et les dirigeants en charge de la gestion des ressources naturelles. C'est là l'objectif d'un partenariat établi l'année passée entre l'IUCN, the Hurgada Environmental Protection and Conservation

Association (HEPCA) et le tour opérateur Kuoni. Ce travail consiste à estimer la vulnérabilité de l'industrie touristique face au changement climatique, en se focalisant sur les côtes de la Mer Rouge, et comment s'adapter au mieux aux futurs changements sur les récifs coralliens. [Plus d'info](#)

### **Protection des Chauves souris en Algérie**

Les chauves-souris nous rendent d'énormes services en nous débarrassant d'insectes nuisibles et surtout des moustiques. Pour mieux les préserver nous avons commencé un travail d'information pour la connaissance de cet animal fragile. Par un membre de la CEC en Algérie, Mourad Ahmim. Les Chiroptères ou chauves souris, appartiennent à la classe des mammifères, et c'est le seul mammifère volant. Les femelles ne mettent bas qu'à un petit par année et c'est ce qui fait que leurs effectifs sont en continuelle régression. En Algérie il existe 26 espèces de chauves souris, qui sont mal connus, et auxquelles on a collé l'étiquette de porte-malheur, vampire, etc. et elles ont fait et font l'objet de chasse pour éloigner le mauvais sort, cette idée est colportée dans toutes les souches et classes de la population rurale ou urbaine. [Plus d'info](#)

### **Join the Rights-Based Approach to Conservation Portal**

On 4 August the Environmental Law Centre's (ELC) Internet platform on Rights-based Approaches to Conservation (RBA) was launched amongst IUCN staff and members of IUCN Commissions ([www.rights-based-approach.org](http://www.rights-based-approach.org)). The aim is for this platform to become a central point for collecting and sharing relevant information and experience on the conceptualization, development and implementation of RBAs to conservation and for building an interactive community of stakeholders, in order to ensure the integration of rights considerations into conservation practices. RBAs to conservation can serve to ensure that the protection of rights and biodiversity conservation become mutually reinforcing. Through its interactive structure the portal aims to develop a community of stakeholders (including an "RBA Community of Practice" made up of IUCN staff, Commission members and institutional members) that will continue to share RBAs to conservation related information (case studies, publications, project information, events, etc.) and support the further promotion and development of RBAs worldwide. [More info](#)

### **Commission on Education and Communication Newsletter August 2010**

Look for 'good practices' among the 35 news items in the July/August issue of the IUCN CEC Newsletter [here](#)

### **Commission on Environmental Law**

Access CEL Newsletters [here](#)

### **Wildtalk August 2010**

The monthly podcast/radio download product produced by IUCN offering environmental news and features drawing on the joint expertise of thousands of scientists and conservationists from around the world. This Month's Edition (download each at: <http://www.iucn.org/wildtalk>)

- **What lies beneath?:** The oceans are home to awe-inspiring biodiversity, much of which is yet to be discovered. They also play a crucial role in our fight against climate change and are essential for the survival of millions of people around the world. And yet, we often forget about their importance and rarely realize how seriously they are threatened by human activity. Francois Simard is Deputy Head of IUCN's Global Marine Programme. He explains the difference between marine ecosystems and terrestrial ecosystems.
- **Drama on the high seas:** The high seas are essentially the oceans' no-man's land – beyond national jurisdiction and with no comprehensive policy or management system to govern them. However, they contain some of the richest biodiversity on the planet, under increasing threat from many sources, including irresponsible fishing and shipping activities, pollution and climate change. Kristina Gjerde is IUCN's High Seas Policy Advisor. Here she explains how the high seas are governed.
- **Park rangers on the front line:** Marcelo Segalerba has worked on the front line of conservation as a park ranger for many years, putting his own life at risk against the likes of poachers and drug traffickers. Having worked as park ranger in the San Miguel National Park, which lies along Uruguay's border with Brazil, Marcelo Segalerba has experienced conservation at the sharp end. He outlines some of the problems facing rangers in the field.
- **Raising the bar for the oil and gas sector:** IUCN has been working with the multinational

petroleum company Shell for the past ten years, with the aim of putting biodiversity higher on the agenda of the private sector, by enhancing Shell's biodiversity conservation performance and setting standards for biodiversity conservation in the energy sector. Through a wide range of projects, IUCN and Shell are continuing to explore ways to raise the bar for the oil and gas sector. Joanna Cochrane is the Sensitive Areas Manager for Shell Upstream International. Here she explains how Shell works within environmentally sensitive areas.

For more information or if you wish to submit an item please contact  
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