



Danphe

Bird Conservation Nepal

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Danphe - A Nationally Threatened Species?

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The Himalayan Monal *Lophophorus impejanus*, Nepal's national bird is perhaps the best known of all birds to the Nepalese public. The male, with his iridescent plumage of nine colours must surely be one of our most beautiful birds. The species's English name is unfortunate as most Nepalis know the species as Danphe, its Nepali name, Monal or Munal is the widely used name for Satyr Tragopan *Tragopan satyra* in the Nepali-speaking part of the Himalayas.

The species has a high profile in Nepal. For example, the Nepal Postal Service has brought out Danphe stamps on at least three occasions at intervals of several years (Baral *et al.* 2012). It is protected by the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029 (1973); one of only nine legally protected bird species in Nepal (BCN and DNPWC 2011). The species is considered in

the Least Concern category by BirdLife International (BirdLife International 2013) and is listed on CITES Appendix 1.

Himalayan Monal is an altitudinal migrant, found on steep grassy slopes and open rocky slopes above the tree-line in summer, mainly between 3300 m and 4570 m (Inskipp and Inskipp 1991). However, in Khaptad National Park it has been found at significantly lower altitudes in the breeding season, at 2500 m in late April and on several dates in May at 3050 m (Inskipp and Inskipp 1988). In winter it descends to lower altitudes, usually down to 2500 m in rhododendron forest (Inskipp and Inskipp 1991, Lelliott and Yonzon 1980). It also frequents forest edges and clearings (Bhattarai 2011), and in Sagarmatha National Park it often occurs in fallow cultivation (Inskipp and Inskipp 1994).



Himalayan Monal by Susheel Shrestha



Himalayan Monal is loosely gregarious even in the breeding season; three or four birds are often seen together. It feeds mainly by digging with its strong bill, and can dig in quite deep snow if necessary. Although cautious, it is less shy than most other Himalayan pheasants and can often be seen in summer foraging in alpine pastures (Grimmett *et al.* 1998). When alarmed it leaps screaming into the air and careers downwards on set wings (Fleming *et al.* 1976). The species feeds on tubers and roots, which seem to form its main diet in addition to seeds, berries, mosses, insects and grubs (Yonzon and Lelliott 1981).

Himalayan Monal was one of the first species recorded for science in Nepal; in 1793 it was collected from an unknown locality by Colonel Fitzpatrick who was sent on a special commercial mission to Nepal by the British East India Company (Fitzpatrick 1811). Fleming *et al.* (1976) and Inskipp and Inskipp (1991) considered the Danphe a common resident. Inskipp and Inskipp (1991) mapped the species widely from the far west to the far east (see map).

Post-1990 it has been recorded in all mountain protected areas: in Khaptad (Khadka 1996), common in Rara (Giri 2005), locally common in Shey Phoksundo (Priemé and Øksnebjerg, 1992, 1995), fairly common in Langtang (Karki and Thapa 2001), common in Sagarmatha (Basnet 2004), and locally common in Makalu Barun National Parks (Cox 1999); recorded in Api Nampa (Thakuri and Prajapati 2012), uncommon in Annapurna (Inskipp and Inskipp 2003), recorded in Manaslu (KMTNC 1998) and in Gaurishankar (Baral and Shah 2009), and rare in Kanchenjunga Conservation Areas (Inskipp *et al.* 2008), and common in Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve in May 2003 (Subedi 2003).

There is no national population estimate for Himalayan Monal. A study carried out in the upper Seti Khola valley in winter and spring 2008 found this species was the most common present amongst the galliforms, with a density of 6.7 birds/km in trail walks. A total of 51 birds was seen at 12 localities in the Khumai, Pipar, Nhirgu, and Namsung areas in April/May 2008 (Poudyal *et al.* 2013). In Sagarmatha National Park 56 birds were seen in 12 areas in May 1994 (Inskipp and Inskipp 1994). Maximum numbers recorded in recent years from Langtang National Park are 27 at ten sites in May 1997 (Robson 1997), 22 on four dates in May 2006 (Chaudhary 2006) and 23 on eight dates in April/May 2007 (Chaudhary 2007).

The population found in a few protected areas may be relatively stable because hunting pressure is low, notably in Sagarmatha National Park where the local Sherpa culture is against hunting and Makalu Barun National Park, where although pheasants are regularly trapped (Inskipp *et al.* 2005), few people live within the national park.

However, In Kanchenjunga Conservation Area only two males were recorded in a 12 day bird survey despite widespread good habitat for the species indicating that hunting and snaring are probably prevalent (Inskipp *et al.* 2008).

Similarly in parts of the Annapurna Conservation Area (ACA) numbers of the species are surprisingly low when considering the extensive high quality habitat available. For example, a June 2009 Cheer Pheasant *Catreus wallichii* survey in the Kali Gandaki valley also recorded Himalayan Monals in June 2009; only six calling males were heard from seven listening stations (Subedi 2009).

In the Pipar area of ACA the population has drastically declined in the last ten years (Laxman Poudyal *in litt.* to C. Inskipp 25



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March 2013), while poaching by hunting and trapping were found to be increasing. These activities were carried out by outsiders, notably collectors of Yarsagumba *Cordyceps sinensis*, a highly valuable medicinal herb, which has only started to be collected in the Pipar area in the last few years (Subedi 2010). A total of 27 traps was found in the Pipar bowl in 2009 and trapping was considered the greatest threat to the survival of Galliformes in Pipar and its adjoining areas (Subedi 2010). Hunting and trapping were found to be heavily practiced by Shikaris (professional hunters/trappers), Gothalas (livestock herders) and medicinal plant collectors on all pheasants in the area. Activities of 18 professional hunters and amateurs, with ages ranging from 25 to 50 years, were reported from ten villages around Pipar. Himalayan Monal formed 21% of the total number of pheasants poached in the Pipar area (Subedi 2010). In 2008, 33 traps and five poacher camping sites were located in the same area (Poudyal 2008).

Tamraker and Waylen (2010) carried out a survey by interviewing local people in the Santel area of ACA and revealed an increase in reports of pheasant hunting including of Himalayan Monal. One villager admitted he had set 130 traps in summer 2008. However, Tamraker and Waylen (2010) considered it is important to know whether the increase in hunting reports is due to an improvement in knowledge because of a closer relationship between villagers and researchers or if it is a sign of a recent increase in hunting and trapping.

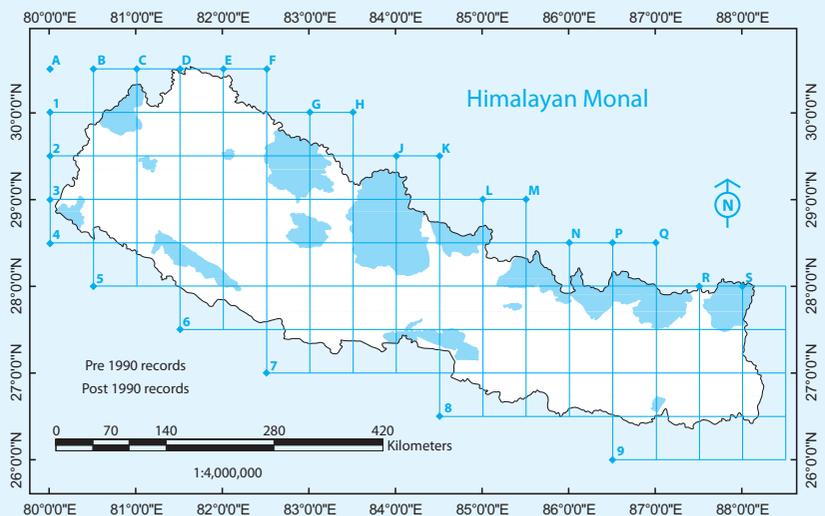
In Rara National Park a Cheer Pheasant survey carried out in 2006 concluded that Cheer and presumably other pheasant species were seriously threatened by hunting and snaring, as well as forest fires and destruction of nests and eggs (Budhathapa 2007). In addition another Cheer Pheasant survey in 2008 that covered the park buffer zone found that snaring, hunting, collection of eggs and overgrazing were impacting on pheasant populations (Singh and KC 2008).

A recently published report by Himalayan Raptor Rescue and the Friends of Nature Organization revealed that various eateries and restaurants in Pame, Pumdibhumdi, Bhujungkhola, Sardikhola, Dobilla and Lumle were offering Lophophorus and other Himalayan pheasants for sale (Sharma 2013).

A distribution map for Himalayan Monal has been prepared for the Nepal bird Red Data Book (see below). Shaded areas in the map indicate Nepal's protected areas' system. The map clearly shows that the number of half degree squares where the species has been recorded has significantly declined from 24 squares pre-1990 to 17 square post-1990, despite the significantly increased observer effort post-1990. The map also shows that outside the protected areas' system there are very few known half degree squares where the species has been recorded since 1990 in contrast to earlier years, indicating that the species has significantly declined in these areas. Although observer effort is



greater within the protected areas' system compared to outside, there has still been greater coverage of unprotected localities post-1990 compared to pre-1990.



Map showing distribution of Danphe in Nepal, pre-1990 and post-1990

Raju Acharya (*in litt.* to C. Inskipp 30 and 31 March 2013) reported that the hunting of Danphe is common in almost all protected areas of Nepal and that trapped birds are easily available in Pokhara, Dhangadhi, Kathmandu, Dolakha, although not as commonly as owls. Hunting was almost always for meat. Illegal hunting and trapping for local consumption, especially during winter when the birds descend to lower altitudes, close to human habitations were considered the most serious threats to Himalayan Monal by Poudyal (2008). Even over 30 years ago, Yonzon and Lelliott (1980) considered that illegal hunting and trapping by shepherds and poachers during and after the monsoon cannot be ignored. Poorneshwor Subedi (*in litt.* to C. Inskipp 1 April 2013) stated that during his fieldwork experience in the Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve and at Pipar, Muri and the Kaligandaki valley in ACA illegal trapping by snares and traps, not hunting with guns, is the major threat to the species. He found that trapping the birds was for meat and believed that illegal trapping of Danphe is widely practiced in Nepal.

Disturbance is another likely factor contributing to the species's population decline. Subedi (2010) reported that local people in the Pipar area had started extensive harvesting of plants and fungi for domestic consumption. This has increased disturbance to galliform's habitat at Pipar. Additional pressure was also reported during intensive harvesting of Yarsagumba carried out by local villagers and outsiders to the area (Subedi 2010). Poudyal (2008) highlighted the increased level of Non Timber Forest Product collection near Pipar, especially the recent development of substantial harvesting of Yarsagumba.

On the way to Rara National Park in November 1991, several people were observed trying to sell crest feathers of male Himalayan Monals (Tika Giri *pers. comm.* to H. S. Baral, December 1991). Poudyal (2008) confirmed that males are hunted for their crest feathers which are used in traditional hats in several rituals in the Himalayan range of Nepal. Poorneshwor Subedi (*in litt.* to C. Inskipp, 1 April 2013) reported that some ethnic groups, for example Thakali and Chantayal and also Magar in some places in Nepal traditionally practice archery (taro hannekhel

in Nepali) in their festivals. People glue three to four pheasant feathers to the tail of their arrows. Danphe feathers are more highly valued than those of other bird species as people believe that arrows with Danphe feathers will hit the target directly and so they will win the competition prize. Trapping Danphe for their feathers is considered another reason for the species's decline in the west by Poorneshwor Subedi (*in litt.* to C. Inskipp, 1 April 2013).

A 2009 study of the wild bird trade throughout Nepal found that Himalayan Monal was one of those traded (Thapa and Thakuri 2009). However the numbers in captivity, which were found in hotels and private homes, were rather few (Ishana Thapa *in litt.* to C. Inskipp 28 March 2013). Raju Acharya (*in litt.* to C. Inskipp 31 March 2013) reported he had heard that in a few cases people kept the birds in hotels to try and please tourists and so increase the number of tourist visitors.

Research on the species for the Nepal bird RDB has shown that although the Himalayan Monal is common or fairly common in a few protected areas, it is now in much reduced numbers in others, as

well as outside the protected areas' system. The RDB assessment concluded the species qualifies as Near Threatened. This means that it may be considered threatened with extinction in the near future, although it does not currently qualify for threatened status.

This is a wake-up call. Danphe is now seriously and widely threatened by trapping in Nepal, even in some protected areas. The legislation is already there to protect this species. Any poaching or trading in the Danphe is strictly prohibited by the NPWC Act 2029 and if found guilty defaulters could be fined with imprisonment. However, in addition, a national conservation awareness programme is needed to alert the Nepalese people of the Danphe's plight and to enlist their support and involvement in conserving the species. Radio programmes, TV and newspapers should all be used to inform the public. A national population monitoring programme should be instigated. Surely we can work together to protect the long term future of our national bird?

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Nepalese conservation

A look at Local Conservation Groups in Nepal working to protect the Country's biodiversity

***David Thomas and **Ishana Thapa**

Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN) is the largest and oldest civil society organisation for ornithologists, birdwatchers and conservationists in Nepal. Its members include students and teachers, professionals and other members of the general public.

Habitats in Nepal range from alpine pastures in the mountains to tropical forests and wetlands in the lowlands. This diversity of habitats supports 871 bird species, 35 of them globally threatened. In 2005 BCN published *Important Birds Areas in Nepal: key sites for conservation*, which identifies 27 Important Bird Areas (IBAs). Fifteen are included in existing protected areas, while 12 are still unprotected. BCN have since identified five more potential IBAs.

The threats facing Nepal's IBAs include forest clearance and degradation, drainage and pollution of wetlands, cultivation and over-grazing of grasslands, hunting and inappropriate development. But IBA conservation in Nepal also faces many special challenges. The mountainous terrain makes many IBAs accessible only by foot, mule or helicopter. Poverty levels in Nepal are the second highest in Asia; for many people in remote areas, IBAs and the goods and services they provide form the main source of livelihood. Nepal has also come through a turbulent period politically; and local government has for a long

time been weak and ineffective.

But the failure of local government opened a 'space' in which communities organised themselves to manage resources and deliver services. This culture of self-help and institution building helped create organisations which have become local-level partners with BCN.

With limited staff and a small budget, BCN began working with local groups as a sustainable approach to conservation and development at IBAs. In every case, Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) are formed around existing community-based institutions of one kind or another. At Phulchoki, for example, the LCGs are the various Forest User Groups (FUGs) that have the rights and responsibility to conserve, manage and use the forest and its resources. The FUGs have been active at Phulchoki for many years, working to restore degraded forest in the lower parts of the IBA. They are natural partners for BCN.

As BCN's Chief Executive, Hum Gurung explains, "Working with local people through LCGs is extremely important –their local knowledge is invaluable in addressing resource management and conservation. BCN encourages LCGs to come up with their own ideas as much as possible, so that their initiatives are genuinely introduced and led from the local level."



Habitats in Nepal range from high mountains to tropical forests by David Thomas



There are now LCGs at 17 of Nepal's 27 IBAs; many IBAs have several. For example, at the Mai Valley Forests IBA, there are seven.

A stimulus for the LCG network came through funding from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) to develop a civil society network for conservation in Nepal. Although the project has ended, some networking activities begun with this support have been continued. IBA-based training in monitoring has been provided, and exchange visits and other connections made between LCGs.

The main purpose of the network is shared learning. For example, the LCG at Ilam IBA (Shree High Altitude Herbal Production and Conservation Institute) has expertise in medicinal plants, which is relevant to communities at other IBAs such as Kanchenjunga Conservation Area. The LCG at Jagdishpur IBA has experience in production and marketing of handicrafts for Nepal's tourist market, which is highly relevant to sites such as Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve IBA, where there are similar raw materials for communities to work with.

The networking structure is informal. In some cases the LCGs network directly amongst themselves. The 10 LCGs working on vulture conservation are the most obvious example: all have visited and learnt from the first 'vulture restaurant' at Pithouli, Nawalparasi. Similar networking may take place between LCGs that have met through exchange visits or workshops and training. For others, BCN acts as a 'hub' connecting LCGs.

At present this is a very loose network with no strict membership criteria, although organisations must be community based, local and not-for-profit. Before taking on an LCG partner, BCN does an organisational assessment. In some cases—for example where the LCG is a Forest User Group—members are elected from the wider community. Others may not be. CN will usually suggest changes that should be made—for example, the election of officers, and inclusion of more women or people from lower castes.

LCGs see a number of benefits from being part of the network. These include opportunities to engage with BCN in activities at site level and nationally; the greater status and profile that comes from working with a national organisation; and enhanced fundraising prospects. The relationship with BCN acts as a reference for donors: the funding that some LCGs have received through CEPF and the UK Government's Livelihoods and Forestry Programme is evidence of this.

As a consequence of their association with BCN, LCGs also get more respect and better treatment from officials like the District Forest Officer. Their prospects of further project work increase; this has happened at Koshi Tappu, where the LCG is now a local partner of a UNDP wetlands project.

While many people have a good knowledge of plants and trees—reflecting their uses for medicine, food, timber, etc—far fewer know about birds, or see their relevance to themselves and their livelihoods. BCN has had to work hard to motivate LCG members to work for bird conservation. The answer has been to link bird conservation to broader natural resource management issues. At Mai Valley IBA, for example, they have linked bird monitoring to forest patrolling and the maintenance of forest quality, so that monitoring becomes part of existing activities

and relates to livelihood benefits. BCN attributes the success of its LCG approach to the way conservation work has been intertwined with income generating activities.



Cheer Pheasant by Dhruvaraj (flickr.com)

288 bird species have been recorded on Phulchoki Mountain IBA, the highest peak on the rim of the Kathmandu Valley. Rivers and streams originating from Phulchoki supply water to the local town of Godawari and beyond, and to adjacent farmland. Deforestation during the 1980s caused disruption to stream flow. In 1995, Nepal's government gave a large area of these forests into the safekeeping of nearby villages. These community forests have become successful, and the forest has shown significant regrowth. Conservation by communities has done much to reverse the degradation of services such as water supply.

Phulchoki, only 40 minutes from the centre of Kathmandu, is a popular destination for Nepalis escaping the city at weekends. BCN has been working with six Forest User Groups at Phulchoki, which vary in size from 57 to 338 members, and manage areas of forest ranging from 34.75 to 283 ha. Each FUG agrees a five-year management plan with the District Forest Office, stipulating permitted levels of harvest and other management arrangements. FUG members are paid to patrol the forest using funds from membership fees and other revenue-generating activities.

The forest is used by local people for a range of forest products, including fuelwood and timber, fodder for livestock, medicinal herbs and flowers, some of which are sold. In Kathmandu, water shortages are common in summer, so the FUGs also sell water, which is collected by tanker and delivered to the capital.

With support from the Whitley Fund, BCN helped five FUGs to improve facilities for picnickers, and to introduce a more organised system for charging. At Godavari Kunda, for example, the community previously received Rs 5000 from picnickers; they now receive about Rs 65,000. These funds contribute to forest patrolling and FUG management costs, but are also used for projects in the village, including improvements to roads, and bursaries for school children from the poorest households.

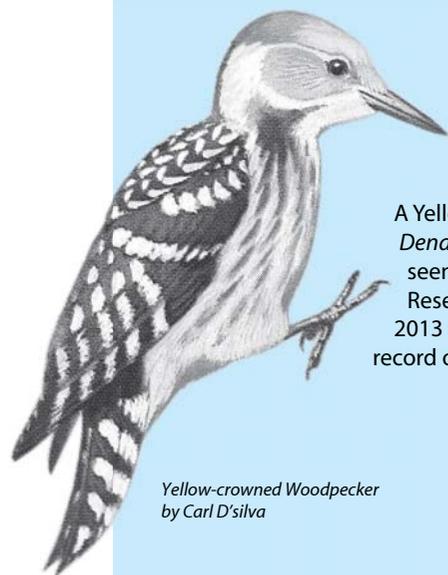
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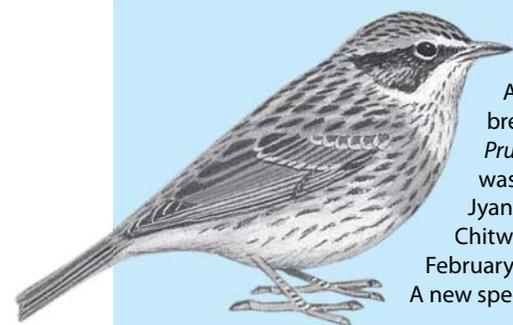


Additional Sightings!



Yellow-crowned Woodpecker
by Carl D'silva

A Yellow-crowned Woodpecker *Dendrocopos mahrattensis* was seen at Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve (KTWR) on 19 March 2013 (SB and BC). It is the first record of this species from KTWR!



Rufous-breasted Accentor
by Clive Byers

A pair of Rufous-breasted Accentor *Prunella strophiate* was sighted near Jyandala village of Chitwan district on 14 February 2013 (RC, JP, SN). A new species for Chitwan!

BC: Badri Chaudhary, JP: Johan Petersson, RC: Ramesh Chaudhary, SC: Suchit Basnet, SN: Stina Nilsson

Compiled by Tika Giri and Hathan Chaudhary



Together for birds and people

BirdLife International is a global conservation federation with a worldwide network of Partner organizations, Representatives and committed individuals.

BirdLife International seeks to conserve all bird species on earth and their habitats and, through this, it works for the world's biological diversity. It recognizes that the problems affecting birds, their habitats and our global environment are linked inseparably with social, economic and cultural factors and that these can only be resolved if human societies function in an ecologically sustainable manner and if the needs, welfare and aspirations of people form a part of all conservation action.

Birds provide BirdLife International with a uniquely valuable focus: they are sensitive indicators of biological richness and environmental trends and fulfil many key ecological functions; they contribute greatly to our understanding of natural processes; they are an important economic resource; and they have inspired and delighted people of many cultures for centuries, which makes them excellent ambassadors for the promotion of conservation awareness and international collaboration.

BirdLife International pursues a programme of:

- Scientific research and analysis to identify and monitor worldwide the most threatened bird species and the most critical sites for the conservation of avian diversity;
- Advocacy and policy development to promote the conservation of birds and biodiversity through sustainability in the use of all natural resources;
- Field action and country conservation programmes, ranging from community-based land-use and management projects to species recovery programmes benefiting both wildlife and humans;
- Network and capacity building to expand and strengthen the global partnership of conservation organizations and to promote worldwide interest in the conservation of birds and the wider environment.

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a BCN initiative to save Nepal's endangered birds.

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News

Membership

Hari Krishna Laudari joined BCN as a Life Member. He is the Planning Officer in the Ministry of Forest and Soil conservation. He has supported BCN at his level best during his role as a Secretary of BCN Pokhara Branch in 2008/2009.

Romash Gautam joined BCN as a Life Member. He is the eldest son of renowned Vulture Biologist, Mr Ramji Gautam.

Education and Awareness

Participatory Environmental Education to the urban community of Kathmandu Valley

Total 1,115 local people of Kathmandu valley including 529 school girls, 484 school boys, from 26 schools, 47 local women, 49 local men from four social organizations were shared the knowledge about environment, wildlife and urban bird conservation through participatory environmental education.

Most of the schools made their visit to Bagmati River Nature Park (BNP) for field based education. During park visit, booklet of indicator and other birds of Nepal, brochure of Bagmati River Nature Park and other bird posters were distributed to the participants. Bird experts guided them about bird identification technique and demonstrated through birdwatching activities. During park visit significance of park in biodiversity conservation were also discussed with visitors.

Our urban environment education programme has been supported by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau since last 6 years.



Urban Bird Count 2013

BCN organized the urban bird count event from February 2 - 4 2013. About 30 minute was spent in the morning. Counting was done in different 30 locations of Kathmandu valley. This programme was run to know the status of birds in urban landscape of Kathmandu Valley at one time and raise awareness on the urban birds among them. Members of BCN and others interested contributed voluntarily in this activity. Altogether 71 volunteers participated in the event. Total 36 different birds were seen during this event and Rock Pigeon was the highest

counted bird with the total count of 854 followed by House Crow 805.

Wetland Day Celebration in Jagadishpur, Kapilvastu

Seventeenth Wetland day celebration was organized by DFO, DNPWC and LDO along with other national conservation partners on 2nd February 2013 in Jagadishpur. The opening ceremony was done by the chief guest Dr. Rajan Pokharel, Regional Director of Western Development Region. Kapilvastu district heads, political party representatives and local community people participated in the event. Bird watching event along the Jagadishpur Lake was organized by Himalayan Nature. BCN had its stall for conservation awareness and distributed wetland posters.



Programme/Project Updates

Vulture Conservation Programme

Myagdi, Baglung and Rolpa District declared as Diclofenac Free Zone

Myagdi District has been declared Diclofenac Free Zone (DFZ) on 25 January 2013. This program was jointly organized by District Livestock Service Office (DLSO) Myagdi and BCN. Altogether 35 participants from various organisation participated in the programme. Honorable Chandra Bahadur Karki, Chief District Officer, Myagdi declared Myagdi district as a Diclofenac Free Zone.

On 30 January 2013, Baglung district was declared Diclofenac Free Zone (DFZ) in the presence of Kashi Ram Sharma, Assistant District Chief Officer, Kishor Chandra Gautam, District Forest Officer, Tapta Gurung, Planning Officer, District Agriculture Office, Yam Parajuli, National Investigation Officer, Dr. Laxman Prasad Ghimire, Animal Development Officer, District Livestock Office, Dr. Deepa Diwali, District Livestock Officer), staffs from District Livestock Service Office, Veterinary /agro-vets, Journalists and local NGO/CBOs representatives.

On 20 February 2013, Rolpa district was declared diclofenac free zone in the presence of Assistant Chief District Officer of



Rolpa Mr. Dhan Bahadur KC, District Forest Officer, Chandra Devlal Karna, Om Bahadur Rana, DSP, District Police Office, District Agriculture Officer, District Development Officer, District Livestock Officer, District Soil Conservation Officer, DLSO officer, Veterinary/Agro-Vets, Journalist and NGO/CBO representatives. The program was jointly organized by DLSO Rolpa, ESDRC and BCN.

This was coordinated by BCN and its local partners and supported by veterinary professionals, drug sellers, political parties and media. As expansion and up scaling of Diclofenac Free Zones, BCN and local government have declared altogether 30 districts including these three districts as Diclofenac Free Zones covering a total area of 54, 472 Sq Km.

National Workshop on “Effect of Diclofenac on Vultures and its Current issues in Nepal”

Vultures are ecologically important birds that face a range of threats in Nepal. As a part of conserving critically endangered vultures through stopping the use of drug diclofenac completely a national workshop on “Effects of Diclofenac on vultures and its current issues in Nepal” was organized by BCN in collaboration with Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation on 13 March 2013 in Hotel Malla, Lainchour. Participants from Department of Drug Administration, Veterinary Standard and Drug Administration Office, Nepal Veterinary Council, Nepal Veterinary Association, National Trust for Nature Conservation, Kathmandu Quarantine Office, Himalayan Nature and Bird Conservation Nepal used the forum to discuss on the current issues of diclofenac use in Nepal. The workshop was quite useful for putting more efforts on stopping the use of the drug diclofenac in veterinary use.



Dr Sushila C Nepali, CEO presented on “Bird Conservation Nepal and its Programme”, Khadananda Paudel, Vulture Conservation Officer presented on “Vulture Conservation Efforts in Nepal” and Dr Amir Sadaula, Veterinary Officer presented on “Practices of NSAIDs use in Nepal”. Focus was on the use of 30 ml Human Diclofenac on the Veterinary practice and proper legislative measures to control it.

Dr. Narayan Prasad Ghimire, Senior Veterinary Officer Registrar of Nepal Veterinary Council, Shyam Kumar Adhikari, Drug Inspector at Department of Drug Administration and Dr. Bimal Kumar Nirmal, President at Nepal Veterinary Association focused on more coordination required between the stakeholders of Diclofenac monitoring and the need of more advocacy work within Vulture Safe Zone. Discussion was focused on the proper control on the use of 30 ml vial of Human Diclofenac produced in Nepal. Participants also discussed on the recent trend of pesticide poisoning in Vultures and way to control them

through participatory and coordination role between different stakeholders working in the field of Vulture conservation.

Workshop on Strengthening Diclofenac Free Zones for conserving critically endangered vultures

In a bid to stop the illegal use of diclofenac in animals and poisoning to kill the problematic animals, BCN in collaboration with local NGO of Dang- Environmental Sustainable Development and Research Centre (ESDRC)-Nepal organised one day training on “Strengthening Diclofenac Free Zones for conserving critically endangered vultures” at Ghorahi, Dang on 14 March 2013. Sixty eight participants representing District Administration Office, District Forest Office, District Livestock Office, District Agriculture Development Office of Dang, Political parties, District Federation of Community Forest User Groups, Charange Community Forest User Group and 13 women cooperative groups from Bijouri and Rampur used the opportunity to discuss on current issues of vulture conservation focusing illegal use of diclofenac across Nepal and illegal poisoning of wild animals and feral dogs. Chief district Officer of Dang was the chief guest in the programme who stated the need to control illegal use of diclofenac and poisoning in the district.



Interaction workshop with Custom Officials, Bhairahawa

In order to stop illegal use of diclofenac in animals, BCN in collaboration with Jatayu Restaurant Management Committee, Gaidatal and District Livestock Service Office (DLSO) Bhairahawa, organised one day interaction workshop at Bhiarahawa on 1 March 2013. Altogether 25 participants representing from District Livestock Service office, Custom office, Police Office, District Para-vet Association and journalists of Bhairahawa used the opportunity to discuss on the issues of illegal use of banned veterinary drug, diclofenac.

Mr. Bhupal Nepali, Field Officer at BCN presented on vulture conservation efforts in Nepal, stopping and controlling illegal use of human diclofenac. Mr. Baburam Malla, coordinator of Jatayu Restaurant Management Committee shared about vulture conservation activities by the local people and similarly, Dr. Laxman Dhakal, Senior Veterinary Officer at District Livestock Service Bhairahawa presented on diclofenac and its harmful effects on vultures.

Eco-tourism promotion workshop in Dhagadhi Kailali

On 29th march 2013, Eco-tourism promotion workshop





has been successfully completed in Dhagadhi Kailali. This program jointly organized by EARTH, Samaiji CFUG Kailali and BCN. Rajendraman Sing Bhandari (District forest officer), Dr. Dekardadev Bhattal (Regional animal lab investigation & research center), Yogendra B. Chand (District Development Office), Bishmubabu Tiwari (Regional forest office), Dhal B. Bohara (District administrative office), Min B. Thapa (DLSO), Upendra Bista (Kailali trade association), Nabin Chanda Joshi (Municipality), Dhan B. Chaudhary (NEVLA), Sharada Shah (Dinesh Cottage), Rupak Malla (EARTH), Man B. Bom (VSFS), Indra Devi Bom (Samaiji CFUG), Dutta Rana (NAGs), Journalist, CFUGs and local people (28) participated in the programme.

Bhupal Nepali from BCN presented on BCN Vulture conservation initiatives in Nepal and EARTH president Mr. Rupak Malla also presented about VSFS & vulture conservation initiative in Kailali. DFO, DDC, RFO, Municipality, Hotel Managers, Kailali Trade Association and CFUGs highlighted on the importance of tourism promotion for VSFS's sustainability.

Vulture Awareness activities

- Awareness activities were conducted in two districts Palpa and Kailali. In Kailali, an awareness campaign was conducted at Khutiya, near to nesting site of Slender-billed Vulture on 19 February 2013. A total of 64 participants including District Forest Officer Mr Rajendraman Singh Bhandari were present at the programme. District Forest Officer Mr Rajendraman Singh Bhandari committed to support NRs. 1,50,000 to Vulture Safe Feeding Site, Khutiya. BCN's income generation activity will be tied up with the income generation plan of District Forest Office in Kailali.
- Similarly, Awareness activity was conducted on 14 March 2013 at Madanpokhara, Palpa. Altogether 156 participants including district level government authorities were participated in the programme. Illegal use of diclofenac and destruction of habitat of vultures were the main topic the forum discussed and raised awareness.

Darwin Ecosystem Services Project

National Sharing Meeting on A national report on biodiversity and ecosystem services for Nepal

BCN organized a national level meeting to share the findings of the national report on Ecosystem Services work on 25 February 2013 at training hall, Babarmahal. Dr Sushila C. Nepali, CEO of BCN welcomed all the participants of the National Sharing Meeting. The meeting was chaired by Mr Megh Bahadur Pandey, Director General of the Department of National Parks

and Wildlife Conservation. In his opening remarks, the DG appreciated the assessment work on ecosystem services carried by BCN in the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and also mentioned that he will be learning more from the presentations ahead.

The meeting progressed by the main presentation from Dr Hum Gurung on Conserving Biodiversity and Delivering Ecosystem Services at Important Bird Areas in Nepal. This was followed by a more technical presentation from Ishana Thapa on Nepal studies of Ecosystem Services at sites using Tool kit for Ecosystem Services Site-based Assessment (TESSA).

After BCN's presentation, CSUWN and IUCN Nepal also presented on their work on Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Schemes for conserving Ghodaghodi Lake Area and Shardu Watershed respectively.



Darwin Bengal Florican Project

Workshop on Bengal Florican survey technique was organized at Sauraha, Chitwan National Park on 3-5 March 2013. The aim of the workshop was do develop Bengal Florican survey techniques and train the field surveyor who will be involved later on the survey of Bengal Florican. Participants were from Chitwan National Park, Bardia National Park, Suklaphata Wildlife Reserve and NTNC/Biodiversity Conservation Centre who were identified on the basis of their ornithological experience and their commitment of involvement in the Bengal Florican survey in future. Dr. Paul Donald, Principal Conservation Scientist, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds was the main resource person and Dr. Hem Sagar Baral also contributed in this workshop.

Satellite transmitter fitting on Bengal Florican at KoshiTappu Wildlife Reserve was done from 26 March to 5 April 2013. The team was successful in catching and fitting transmitter on two males. First male was caught on 1 April 2013 and second on 2 April 2013 at Jabdi Island. Jabdi lies outside the protected area. Regular monitoring of the tagged floricans are being done via satellite and have been able to find good results so far.

Community Based Nature Conservation: A Source of Sustainable Livelihood Project

With funding from the Canadian High Commission's Canadian Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI), BCN implemented nature conservation and sustainable livelihood project at Ghachowk, Kaski where BCN has been managing the Vulture Safe Zone. Bee-keeping training was organized for 30 people in Ghachowk from 13-17 February 2013. DLSO was consulted for the training





program and Mr Dipendra Pokharel was assigned to conduct the training. Besides Mr Pokharel, practical was taught by Mr Chet P. Tiwari from National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC). Bee-keeping training was organized in coordination with Annapurna Women Organic Farming Cooperative based in Ghachowk. All 25 bee-keepers were given out a set of beehive with five plates of bee, hat, stirring equipment, net and one Madena to the cooperative to take out the honey.



As we all know the Ghachowk site is also famous for vulture conservation and pesticides around the world is killing the bees. The uses of pesticides are also harmful to the bird species in the area. Hence besides bee-keeping training a three day orientation program was given out in Ghachowk for 40 women of all the wards in organic farming. The three day orientation was conducted from 4-6 March 2013. This will also help to raise awareness on how pesticides can harm their own health and other organisms.

A hoarding board displaying let us visit Ghachowk and support eco-tourism has been kept at the bus park and along the path way of the lakeside coordinating with NTB and Pokhara Municipality. Four other destination boards are kept in the Ghachowk areas. Besides the hoarding board tourism promotion brochure has also been published.

During the course of CFLI program implementation, a partner of CFLI TV crew from Nepal Television filmed various events and interviewed with community people.

Visit

A team from Zoological Society of London, Nick Lindsay, Dr. Andrew Routh, Dr. Nic Masters and Dr. Gitanjali B. Bhattacharya visited BCN on 8 February 2013 to learn about the Vulture Conservation Programme and other programme/projects of BCN. Discussion was held on how to maximize their role and support to Vulture conservation work in Nepal and also about any future concepts on Nepal's biodiversity conservation work that can be initiated jointly in Nepal with BCN and NTNC.

Publication

To mark the 30th anniversary of BCN, the second issue of Ibisbill was published this year after nearly 15 years of publication of the first issue. Ibisbill includes 22 papers covering a wide range of subjects contributed by 33 writers. This issue focuses on the valuable research work carried out by Nepalese ornithologists over recent years, both studies made by BCN staff and also other bird conservationists in Nepal. This issue of Ibisbill was generously sponsored by RSPB and Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge.



Our regular newsletters Danphe (English) and Munal (Nepali) were also published and distributed to the members. Also BCN brochure was published both in Nepali and English.

Staff Capacity Building/Departure

- Amir Sadaula, Veterinary Officer attended International Kite Festival from 13-22 January 2013.
- Bhupal Nepali, Field Officer attended VSZ workshop at Pinjore from 18-19 March 2013.
- Khadananda Paudel, VCO attended Student conference on Conservation Science held on 19-21 March 2013 at University of Cambridge, Cambridge UK. He also attended a short course on "A Practical introduction to social survey design for conservation science" and will also support in carrying out research on strengthening provisional safe zone in Nepal from 27 March to 21 April 2013.
- Ishana Thapa attended Global Environment Facility (GEF) Expanded Constituency (ECW) workshop in Cambodia from 19-21 March 2013.
- Menuka Basnyat, Membership and Education Officer left BCN from March 2013.

Donation

BCN welcomes all kinds of support from individuals and institutions. You can even help us by providing us your camera, binocular, telescope, scientific equipment etc. Further more, we will also be grateful if any one provides educational materials for our library. All support will be duly acknowledged.



The newsletter is produced quarterly for members of Bird Conservation Nepal. The aim of the newsletter is to inform BCN members on the recent development of ornithology in Nepal and any other relevant news on birds. It is circulated to all members free of cost. The individual annual membership is NRs. 400 for any SAARC nationals and equivalent Nepali rupees of US\$ 15.00 for others to join as Friends of BCN.

Those who would like to donate to or be a member of BCN can do so by a direct bank transfer, to the bank details below, or via cheque. Cheques should be made payable to Bird Conservation Nepal and sent to the address below.

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Established in 1982, Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN) is the leading organisation in Nepal, focussing on conservation of birds, their habitats and sites. It seeks to promote interest in birds among the general public, encourage research on birds, identify major threats to birds' continued survival. As a result, BCN is the foremost scientific authority providing accurate information on birds and their habitats throughout Nepal. We provide scientific data and expertise on birds for the Government of Nepal (GoN) through the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) and work closely in birds and biodiversity conservation throughout the country.

BCN is a membership-based organisation with a founding President, patrons, life members, ordinary members, friends of BCN and active supporters. Our membership provides strength to the society and is drawn from people of all walks of life from students, professionals and conservationists. Our members act collectively to set the organisation's strategic agenda.

We are committed to showing the value of birds and their special relationship with people. As such, we strongly advocate the need for peoples' participation as future stewards to attain long-term conservation goal.

As the Nepalese partner of BirdLife International, a network of more than 110 organisations around the world, BCN also works on a worldwide agenda to conserve the world's birds and their habitats.

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