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# Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force

## News Bulletin No 27 · Nov 2022







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*The Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) News Bulletin is a regular, half-yearly update of activities of the SBS Task Force of the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP). The News Bulletin is edited by Dr Christoph Zöckler, Coordinator of the EAAFP SBS Task Force with assistance from Sayam Chowdhury, Bangladesh and Dr Elena Lappo, Russia, who also chairs the Russian team of the Task Force.*

**Mission:**

*The East Asian and Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) aims to coordinate the conservation activities identified in the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Single Species Action Plan for the species, which was commissioned by BirdLife International. The activities in the Action Plan are regularly reviewed and updated by all Flyway Members and a growing network of active supporters and groups in the Flyway countries, and beyond.*

*The Task Force originates from the establishment of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Recovery Team (SBS RT) in 2004, when several partners active in the conservation of this globally threatened wader met in Edinburgh. With the growing level of activity, the finalization of the Action Plan in 2008 and a growing network of partners, organisations and supporters the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) was formed at the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) meeting in Korea in February 2010. In December 2010, the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force (SBS TF) was officially endorsed as one of the first species Task Forces by the Partnership under the EAAFP Shorebird Working Group. Implementing organisation for the SBS TF is BirdLife International through its partner Birds Russia. It is chaired by the Government Partner of Russia. Task Force members consist of the EAAFP Government Partners of key range states for the species and international conservation organisations. These are: the Russian Federation, Japan, People's Republic of China, People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, Union of Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Bangladesh and India, the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT), Wetlands International, a representative of the EAAFP Shorebird Working Group, Fauna Flora International (FFI) and experts and conservation organisations from principal range states and other partners. We are grateful to the RSPB, NABU and the Manfred-Hermesen-Stiftung for their continued support of the SBS Task Force and Spoon-billed Sandpiper projects across the range states.*

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*Layout by Matthias Fanck Graphic Design, Zell, Germany, German SBS Support Group*



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Natalia Emelchenko

## Foreword from the Editor

Dr Christoph Zöckler · Manfred Hermsen Foundation, SBS TF Coordinator · Nov 2022

Most of us agree that this year has been particularly challenging, not just for the Task Force, but our group was certainly hit especially hard. In addition to Covid, the coup in Myanmar and the war in Ukraine, we have had to deal with the loss of Evgeny our chair. I still grapple with the fact that my friend is no longer around, at my side or on Zoom, giving valuable advice, sharing stories and talking through all the issues in our flyway and beyond.

It is astonishing though, that under the lead of Elena Lappo, a small Russian team travelled to Chukotka again this summer and surveyed the last remaining population as they have done every year before, under scientific supervision by Pavel Tomkovich, and logistic help from Moscow by Vladimir Yakovlev the new director of BirdsRussia. The head-starting though, had to take a break, and the remaining population seemed to have declined a little further – even though only a little bit.

I think we all agree that we can call ourselves very lucky. Lili Sun from MCF agreed to chair our group. Lili has already demonstrated her dedication and strong support for our Task Force and I am sure that our group will come through these challenging times even stronger under her leadership. A new Action Plan for the species has been initiated and the work on the plan is in full progress, with people from all over the flyway involved. While we still struggle to fully understand what drives the continuing, yet slowing decline of our sandpiper, this is also a time for reflection and pause. We decided not to rush to hastily draft the Action Plan, but rather reflect carefully on all the options and possibilities, some of which might not have crossed our minds as yet, others such as climate change might be a mammoth task too big for our 'force' alone.



Regardless of all the geopolitical and administrative changes our diverse team has demonstrated a great resilience and collaborative spirit that goes well beyond the hazards, restrictions and obstacles the new world seems to have created. We will continue despite the increasing difficulties and hope that these challenges do not impede the wellbeing of our little sandpiper.

I would like to thank all our supporters and donors, who have stuck with us in these difficult times and I hope you enjoy the many reports from all over the flyway.



## Foreword from Chair Lili Sun

去年我参加了生物多样性公约第一阶段的会议，前些天我刚在日内瓦参加了《湿地公约》第十四届缔约方大会（COP14），在埃及举办2022年联合国气候变化大会COP27也刚刚结束。感慨良多。

Last year I attended the first phase of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Kunming, a couple of days ago, I was in Geneva for 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP14), and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 27) held in Egypt. I have many thoughts and feelings about this.

我们处在大变革的时期，资源短缺、气候变化、人口爆炸、环境污染、疾病流行等非传统安全问题层出不穷，我们面临的挑战与风险日益增多。2020年联合国生物多样性大会（CBD COP15）的主题为：“生态文明：共建地球生命共同体”，大会的第一阶段通过了昆明宣言，承诺制定、通过和实施一个有效的“2020年后全球生物多样性框架”，包括提供与《生物多样性公约》一致的必要的实施手段，以及适当的监测、报告和审查机制，以扭转当前生物多样性丧失趋势并确保最迟在2030年使生物多样性走上恢复之路，进而全面实现“人与自然和谐共生”的2050年愿景。第二阶段的会议即将在加拿大蒙特利尔举行。我也即将赴会参与，期待贡献我们的力量。

We are in a period of great change. Non-traditional security problems such as resource shortages, climate change, population explosions, environmental pollution, and epidemic are emerging one after another. We are facing increasing challenges and risks. The theme of the 2020 UN Biodiversity Conference is "Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth". The conference adopted the Kunming Declaration, which commits to ensures the development, adoption and implementation of an effective post 2020 global biodiversity framework, that includes provision of the necessary means of implementation, in line with the Convention, and appropriate mechanisms for



monitoring, reporting and review, to reverse the current loss of biodiversity and ensure that biodiversity is put on a path to recovery by 2030 at the latest, towards the full realization of the 2050 Vision of "Living in Harmony with Nature". The second phase will be held in Montreal, Canada. I will also attend the conference and look forward to contributing.

在今年湿地公约大会（COP14）期间发布的《武汉宣言》也强调和重申了湿地保护、修复和合理利用是《公约》的核心原则，与其他多边环境协定所有利益相关方合作，抓紧实施好这些原则，对于遏制和扭转生物多样性丧失，减缓、适应和抵御气候变化不利影响，实现2030年可持续发展议程及其可持续发展目标，落实联合国生态系统十年修复行动，造福今世后代都是至关重要的。

The Wuhan Declaration was adopted at COP14. It emphasized and re-iterated that wetland conser-

vation, restoration and wise use are the core principles of the Convention, and that working with all stakeholders of other multilateral environmental agreements to implement these principles urgently is essential to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, mitigating, adapting and resisting the adverse impacts of climate change, achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and implementing the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration for the benefit of present and future generations.

而这次在埃及的沙姆沙伊赫举办的第二十七届联合国气候变化大会（COP27），致力于将各国重新团结起来，落实具有里程碑意义的《巴黎协定》，为人类和地球创造更美好的未来。这次大会将基于COP26的会议成果，就一系列关键问题采取行动，以应对气候紧急情况，包括紧急减少温室气体排放、建设复原力、适应气候变化不可避免的影响、兑现为发展中国家的气候行动提供资金的承诺等。

The 27th UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) was held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. COP27 is dedicated to reuniting countries to implement the landmark Paris Agreement and create a better future for people and the planet. Based on the outcomes of COP26, the conference will take action on a range of key issues to address the climate emergency, including urgently reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building resilience, adapting to the inevitable impacts of climate change, and delivering on commitments to fund climate action in developing countries.

作为全球濒危物种的勺嘴鹬，它的栖息地从北方高纬度的苔原到中国的滨海滩涂，再到位于东南亚沿海。我发现，近期举办的几场国际性大会都对勺嘴鹬的保护有着相关性极高的影响。体现了跨区域、跨尺度、多元化的特点。勺嘴鹬保护也是全人类在生物多样性保护、湿地保护、应对气候变化的典型案例。

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper is a globally endangered species whose habitat ranges from the

high latitude tundra of the North to the coastal mudflats of China to being located off the coast of Southeast Asia. I found that several recent international conferences are having high relevance to the conservation of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, reflecting the characteristics of being cross-regional, cross-scale, and diversity. The conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpipers is also a typical example of human-wide efforts in biodiversity conservation, wetland protection, and combating climate change.

自SBS TF成立以来，在前任主席Evgeny先生的领导下，我们在种群恢复、栖息地保护上取得了骄人成绩。在后2020年时代，作为勺嘴鹬保护的专门工作组，会继续坚持共建共享，坚持合作共赢，坚持交流互鉴，以行动共创未来。Since the establishment of SBS TF, under the leadership of the former Chairman Mr. Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, we have made remarkable achievements in population recovery and habitat conservation. In the post-2020 era, as a specialized working group for the conservation of Spoon-billed Sandpipers, we will continue to insist on building and sharing together, on win-win cooperation, on exchange and mutual understanding, and on taking actions to create a common future.

针对今后的工作，我有几点设想：

1. 大力加强资金筹措，推动迁飞区的保护。疫情肆虐，全球经济增长放缓。保护领域的资金投入尤显紧张。我们将巩固已有的资金募集资源，创新资金募集的途径与形式，开拓新的筹款资源，吸引更多的捐赠者参与到保护工作中，扩大筹集资金体量，提高保护事业可持续发展的能力。

To strengthen the fundraising and promote the protection in the EAAF. The epidemic is raging, and global economic growth is slowing. Funding in the conservation field is particularly strained. In order to expand the volume of funds raised and enhance the sustainable development of conservation work, we will consolidate the existing fund-

raising resources, innovate new ways and forms of fund-raising, attract more donors to participate in our work.

2. 推进勺嘴鹬全球行动计划制定与落实。第一版的勺嘴鹬全球行动计划在2010年发布，10余年来发挥了重要的作用，拓展了我们的认知，取得了突破性的保护成效，在这个过程中我们也发现了新的问题与挑战。再这样的背景之下，我们正在制定新的全球行动计划。期待新的行动计划能为sbs tf指明未来10年的工作方向。

To develop the International Spoon-billed Sandpiper Action Plan. The first edition of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Global Action Plan was released in 2010 and has played an important role since then. It expands our understandings and achieves breakthrough conservation results, and we also identified new problems and challenges. Based on this background, we are developing a new global action plan. We look forward to the new action plan as a guide for SBS TF's work in the next 10 years.

3. 促进保护协同，推进主流化进程。勺嘴鹬途径迁飞区20多个国家，将我们这群来自全球各地的人们聚集在一起。全球保护工作的推进既具有整体性，更要从区域角度去协同发展。各地保护工作的发展存在较大的差异，一方面既要广纳参与者尤其是东南亚的保护工作者，另一方面也需要给一线保护人员更多的帮助，共同促进保护工作的开展，实现保护工作的主流化，与保护效益的发挥。

To enhance the synergy and promote the mainstreaming of the conservation process. Spoon-billed Sandpipers migrate through more than 20 countries, and bring us together from all over the world. The promotion of conservation is both holistic worldwide and collaborative from a regional perspective. The development of conservation work varies greatly from region to region. On the one hand, we need to include a wide range of participants, especially conservationists from ASEAN, and on the other hand, we need to give more assistance to frontline conservationists, so that we can jointly promote conservation work and realise the mainstreaming and the benefit for people.

勺嘴鹬将我和SBS TF的伙伴们连接在一起。在高不确定性的今天，希望我们的保护工作依然维持，希望我们对于保护工作的热情不减，让我们能够一起为了这一可爱却又濒危的动物共同努力。

The Spoon-billed Sandpipers connect me with my fellow SBS TF members. During this special era with high uncertainties, I hope that our conservation work is still maintained and that our passion for conservation remains undiminished so that we can work together for this lovely but endangered animal.



## Field season of 2022 for SBS monitoring on the breeding grounds

Pavel S. Tomkovich, Anton P. Ivanov, Egor Yu. Loktionov, Elena G. Lappo



*Nest east from Meinypilgyno found on 20 June 2022*

*Elena Lappo*

**I**t happened that the passed field season was a rather tough one with many things not working as expected. The deterioration of international relations at the global scale at the beginning of 2022 affected both the transfer of funding for the expedition and the delivery of some staff from abroad. This situation together with the inability of aviculturists to join led to both, a small team of the expedition and no head-starting for Spoon-billed Sandpipers (SBS) this year. Also the field season only lasted to the mid of July thus being shorter than usual.

The weather in our study area near Meinypilgyno in Chukotka in 2022 was predominantly dull and cool with many foggy days in spring and summer. But luckily conditions slightly improved soon after arrival of SBS till mid-June allowing the birds to

successfully initiate breeding and egg-laying. Early opening of the mouth of the river flowing into the Bering Sea (4 June) prevented severe flooding on the two largest lakes in the lake-river system of the area, allowing some pairs to nest on their traditional territories in the floodplain.

The very first SBS (male Lime 24) was recorded on 31 May, but several more birds were seen only two days later, followed by others in subsequent days. Within the main monitoring area in the vicinity of Meinypilgyno we were able to find only 8 pairs of SBS with two of them breeding at the Pekul-neiskoe Lake floodplain, one on the coastal plain few kilometers from the village and five others in the moraine hills. In addition, four more SBS pairs were revealed during two visits to the remote area of the oil drill tower in mid-June; no particular





From left: Anton Ivanov, Elena Lappo, Egor Loktionov, Pavel Tomkovich near the monument to the Spoon-billed Sandpiper. Meinypilgyno Village is in the background Anton Ivanov

nest search was undertaken there. Thus, in total 12 breeding pairs of SBS were known to us in 2022, which are fewer than 15 pairs in 2021, indicating a continued decline of the local population under control.

Among 33 SBS known in the study area 4 birds (all males) were unmarked and unrecognizable individually. Seven birds (5 males and 2 females) were raised in captivity as a result of the head-starting project; 5 of them were in pairs and two males remained solitary. One pair consisted of head-started birds only. Among the remaining color-marked SBS 14 birds have formerly gotten their Engraved Leg Flags (ELFs) as adults, and 8 other birds were marked as chicks in the wild.

Interestingly and sadly the sexual disproportion in the local SBS population was increasing in recent years. We recorded in the area 2 solitary males in both 2019 and 2020, later 5 in 2021, and 8 or 9 in 2022. It is not clear why this sharp increase happened.

Four of seven nests under control were successful this year. A female in one additional pair (female 8M with an unmarked male) was observed be-



Chick ringing by Pavel Tomkovich and Anton Ivanov Elena Lappo

ing gravid rather late (22 June), thus presumably laying a replacement clutch. In the same site two unmarked SBS warning like having broods were observed by a colleague at the beginning of August.

Therefore, it is possible that another undetected pair was breeding at that site rather late. Unexpectedly to us, four old flagged SBS (one male and 3 females) that have not been recorded in our monitoring area near Meinypilgyno this year, were observed later in August to October on the flyway, in China. This was especially surprising regarding the females (Lime 34, Lime 76 and Lime J0) taking into account that many solitary males were present in our area. This may mean that either these females have moved over large distances elsewhere for breeding or our surveys were unable to find additional pairs with these birds. More efforts should be undertaken next summer to increase the coverage of the area.

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, it was not possible to revisit the remote area with 4 breeding pairs in July. As a result we do not know whether those birds were breeding successfully or not.

According to information from camera traps set up near nests of several other shorebird species, Arctic Skuas *Stercorarius parasiticus* were the only recorded nest predators in 2022, although several





Male 'White 1H'

Elena Lappo



SBS female 'Lime 8M' on 21 June 2022

Elena Lappo



SBS male 'White EH' hatched and raised in captivity in 2020, on its territory on 6 June 2022

Pavel Tomkovich



SBS male 'White XC' hatched and raised in captivity in 2020, returned to the natal area in 2022, but remained solitary

Pavel Tomkovich



Adult SBS female Lime 03 ringed as a chick on 15 July 2015 and recaptured on 6 July 2022

Anton Ivanov



SBS chick ringed with "lucky" code "OK" on 5 July 2022

Anton Ivanov





*Aerial view of snow cover along the edge of the moraine hills north and west of Meinypilgyno on 23 May 2022*

*Pavel Tomkovich*



*The First River (channel) connecting the Vaamychgyn and Pekulneiskoe lakes near Meinypilgyno with the blocked river mouth into the sea (shown by arrow) on 23 May 2022*

*Pavel Tomkovich*

other potential predators were on photos of the camera traps in the vicinity of nests.

In total, 13 chicks from four nests and one adult male were ringed and supplied with ELF's this year, which is the lowest number since 2014.

The good news is that three of these young SBS

from three different nests were recorded in South Korea and China on migration in September and October this year. We very much hope that it will be possible to continue monitoring of the local SBS population near Meinypilgyno in subsequent years as well as to resume head-starting again.



*An Arctic Skua predating eggs in a nest of Pacific Golden Plovers on 15 June 2022*

*Image taken by 'TrophyCam' camera*

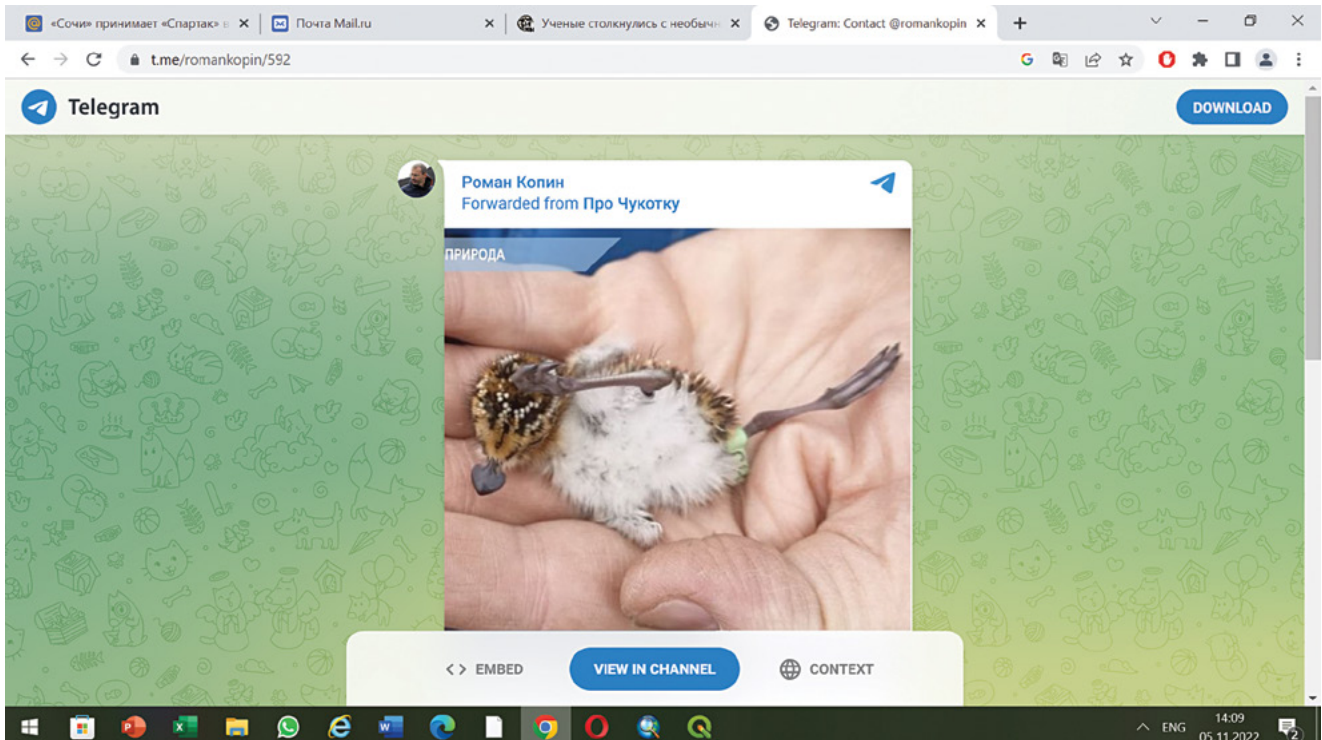
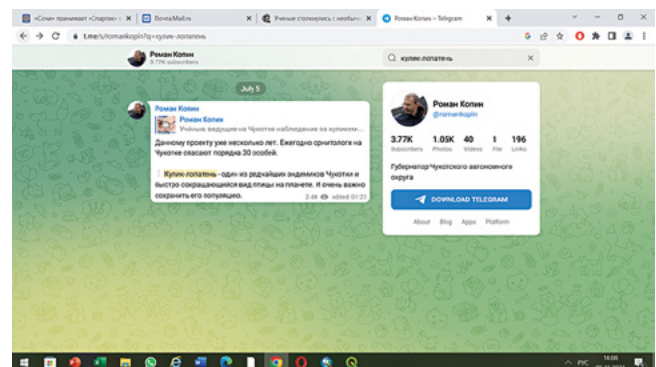
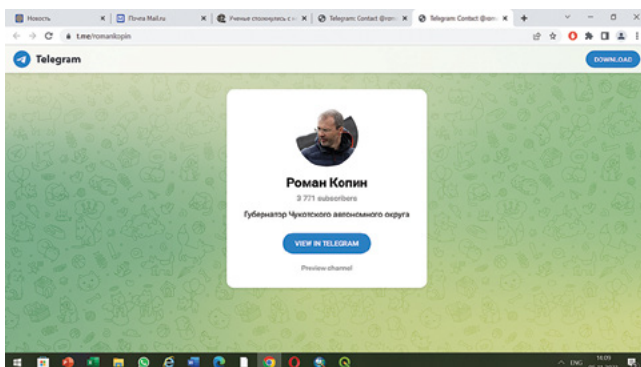


*A Red Fox visiting the same nest of Pacific Golden Plovers after the eggs were depredated by an Arctic Skua*

*Image taken by 'TrophyCam' camera*

We also think that it is necessary to expand the ecological education for children and adults. Some preliminary results of our fieldwork were reported for the public on local Chukotka radio “Snowstorm” on 3 July in Russian and translated into Chukchii, and in local newspaper (5 inter-

view) and TV news in Anadyr, Chukotka, as well as on the websites of BirdsRussia (3 sites), Institute of Geography Rus. Acad. Sci. (1 site), and on Telegram channel of Chukotka Governor Roman Kopin (see below). All these items were presented in Russian.





## Creation of the Nature Park “SBS Land” in Chukotka: small steps and big problems in 2022

Konstantin B. Klokoy, Elena G. Lappo



*In the land of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, Meinypilgyno 2016*

*Matthias Fanck*

According to the original plan the Nature Park “Land of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper” was planned as a large 1,450,000 ha protected area not only to save the SBS Spoon-billed Sandpiper as the endemic species of Chukotka, but also to protect many other arctic birds inhabiting the shores of lagoons and lake-river systems of South Chukotka, whose numbers were noted to be declining, including the species from the Red Data Book of Chukotka Autonomous Okrug and included in the lists of Russian-American, Russian-Japanese, Russian-Korean and Russian-Chinese bilateral agreements (Whooper Swan, Black Brant, Emperor Goose, Aleutian Tern, Osprey, White-tailed Eagle, Gyrfalcon, Peregrine Falcon, White-billed Loon, Wandering Tattler, Great Knot, Chukotka subspecies of Red Knot and many other species). It is also a place of the biggest seabird colonies by species composition and number in the region and in the world, walrus rookeries, home for Black-capped

Marmots and Snow Sheep, important salmon spawning sites, major moulting areas for geese and ducks, unique landscapes and relict plant communities, conserving the heritage of ancient Beringia, a number of other precious ecological and archaeological objects, as well as monuments, connected with history and traditional culture of indigenous people: Chukchi and Kereks.

But after a good start in 2018-2019, the work on the establishment of the Nature Park “Land of the Spoon-Billed Sandpiper” or “SBS Land” in the Anadyrsky District of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug was suspended mainly due to opposition from parts of the government and the Anadyr community. Two circumstances currently prevent the establishment of a large Park area aiming to include a broad range of conservation goals:

- The Department of nature resources and ecology

Chukotka autonomous district's reluctance to take active steps towards the establishment of the Park, which is expressed in its position to minimize the area and narrow the objectives of the Park.

- Implicit opposition from the public in Anadyr. The reasons for this are, firstly, lack of trust in all formal restrictions imposed by the authorities on hunting and fishing, and secondly, the interests of small businesses, namely local businessmen who promote services for visiting hunters and fear that the Snow Sheep habitat will be closed for hunting, as well as fishing companies who fear that access to the seashore will be restricted in the Park area.

Initially, the local dissatisfaction with the plans for the Park creation was not clearly manifested. This year, however, a campaign against the creation of protected areas began in Anadyr (see "Ecology and Business" Journal, N2, 2022). Thus, the Committee on Industrial and Agricultural Policy of the Chukotka Parliament held a meeting in March 2022. This meeting expressed concern about conservation initiatives in Chukotka. The meeting participants raised worries that in the conservation areas "under the guise of nature conservation in Chukotka, commercial, sport and recreational hunting, fishing, passage and anchoring of vessels off public roads, overflight by aircraft within 1 km and over 2 km of bird important breeding, moulting and roosting sites, marine mammal rookeries, and exploration activities may be prohibited".

"In fact, the creation of protected areas is nothing but the seizure of land from the State under the guise of protecting wildlife".

This meeting in this case was directed against the WWF, which according to the meeting participants "strives in every way to create a protected area in Chukotka" and "should be asked to leave the territory of the Chukotka Autonomous Okrug".

While there have been no such statements towards BirdsRussia, it is difficult to discuss proposals for a new Nature Park in the context of such sentiments within the regional Government. In view of the above, we visited the governmental Department of Natural Resources and Ecology in Anadyr in July 2022, to discuss the future of the project creating a Nature Park and agreed on advice of the Department to significantly reduce the size of the protected area to avoid both, problems with the local people who live on the same areas as SBS does, and also conflicts with industrial activities, extracting gas, oil and coal, which are overlapping with some former breeding areas of SBS and (3) to avoid some other hidden local conflicts.

And we decided to change the direction of our efforts to create the Park and to act along the following lines:

- 1) Reconsider the concept of creating the Park, dividing the overall task into several steps. Instead of proposing the creation of a large Nature Park to protect a wide range of biodiversity conservation issues at once, smaller protected area with key Spoon-Billed Sandpiper (SBS) habitats is proposed first, and later think about protection of neighboring areas.

- 2) To revise the project of the Park in reducing its area and narrowing its objectives and significance to key ornithological areas for the protection of the SBS habitats with adjacent areas of importance for water birds breeding in the South-East of Chukotka. Consider this reduced project as a first phase for the development of protected areas in South-East Chukotka. Consider the remaining biodiversity conservation objectives, in particular the protection of huge sea bird colonies at Cape Navarin, in a second and subsequent phase.

- 3) To develop and implement a broader work plan to raise awareness and concern for biodiversity



conservation challenges among the local population of South-East Chukotka and the Anadyr City community. In the course of this work, explain to the public the basic principles of biodiversity protection, including the concept of a flagship species, the need to involve local people in biodiversity protection, and to increase the program on ecological education, which we are usually running in the frame of our scientific program, not only for children, but also for adults.

4) Try to organise a workshop or a conference on biodiversity conservation and the development of

a system of protected areas in South-East Chukotka in Anadyr in 2023.

We hope and looking forward that the creation of the Nature Park “Land of SBS” will be finally successful and bring positive results even though the area will be smaller but not less important. This will be as well the final step in the chain of SBS related protected areas along the East Asian flyway, as implemented in China, Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand and other countries. This step will not only be important for SBS, as the flagship species, but also for many declining migratory wader species along the East Asian Flyway.



*The land of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper – what was planned before (red) and what is recommended now (green)*

„Land of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper“ is also the title of a phantastic film trilogy by Julia Darkova

and Andrey Maksimov. Watch the trailer at: <https://birdschukotka.com/en>

## Background information about Tiaozini wetland

Kaiwen An (MCF)

Tiaozini, part of Dongtai City, Yancheng, Jiangsu Province, China, is an important resting place for the globally endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea*, providing food and moulting grounds for Spoon-billed Sandpiper during the annual migration season, with a peak of 106 Spoon-billed Sandpiper recorded in autumn 2021. In addition, Tiaozini is also an important breeding site for the threatened Saunders's Gull *Chroicocephalus saundersi*, with about 1,000 pairs breeding in the northern part of the southern reclamation area of Tiaozini beach every spring.

In July 2019 China's first coastal World Heritage site and the second largest area of intertidal wetland on earth the Tiaozini Wetland was listed as natural heritage to the world. With the help of government-led and scientific research institutes, the first fixed high tide migratory bird habitat was established in China. The 720-acre high tide migratory bird habitat has been selected as one of the world's "100+ Biodiversity Cases" and is regarded as a "Chinese model" for biodiversity conservation.

### Integrating multiple efforts to promote Spoon-billed Sandpiper conservation

The Mangrove Foundation (MCF), a NGO, has entered into a framework agreement lasting five years with the Administrative Committee of the Coastal Economic Zone of Dongtai, Jiangsu Province, and the School of Nature Conservation of Beijing Forestry University (commissioned by the East Asia-Australia Migratory Bird Research Centre of Beijing Forestry University) to establish a strategic partnership for the conservation and development of the Tiaozini Wetland. The main cooperation between the three parties includes exploring cooperation mechanisms for Spoon-billed Sandpiper conservation, Tiaozini wetland protection and restoration, ecological monitoring, natural sciences and ecotourism. For example, they will jointly promote the conservation and development of the Tiaozini Wetland, including

ecological monitoring and research on the critically endangered species of Spoon-billed Sandpiper, comprehensive monitoring of the Tiaozini Wetland ecosystem, set up the Secretariat of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Conservation Alliance in the Dongtai Coastal Economic Zone, and promote habitat management in the Tiaozini Wetland, such as restoration and management of the high-tide habitat of the wintering grounds of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Tiaozini, and clean-up of invasive alien species such as Smooth Cordgrass *Spartina alterniflora*. MCF will also promote international exchanges on migratory bird conservation and coastal wetland conservation in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, and create international cooperation on the ecology of the Belt and Road Initiative.

In 2022, the Yancheng City Wetland and World Natural Heritage Conservation Management Centre also signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Mangrove Foundation, with the objective to further enhance the conservation and management capacity of China's Yellow (Bohai) Sea Migratory Bird Habitat (Phase I) and promote the ecological restoration of wetlands under its jurisdiction and the exploration of wetland ecological conservation publicity and education and sustainable development paradigms. In the memorandum of cooperation, the consensus between the two parties are: to play the advantages of both sides, integrate social resources, jointly promote the conservation and restoration of China's Yellow (Bohai) Sea Migratory Bird Habitat (Phase I), ecological monitoring, science popularization and education, ecological tourism, carry out the practice of fine-tuned management of heritage sites and improve the quality of wetlands. Specifically, we will actively promote the conversion of the value of the ecological products of the heritage sites, accelerate the development of ecological products focusing on "ecological experience", explore methods and practices of ecological





*In the mudflats of Tiaozini*

*Katherine Leung, Ziyu Yang, Christoph Zöckler*

compensation such as green finance and ecological insurance, and jointly support the “Yellow Sea Wetland Research Institute” and the “Yancheng Birdwatching Association”. We will also jointly support the capacity building of relevant social organisations such as the Yellow Sea Wetland Research Institute and the Yancheng City Birdwatching Association; jointly promote the construction of the “Ant Forest” socially beneficial conservation site in the Tiaozini Wetland, promote social participation and enhance the public benefit of the heritage site; jointly participate in the investment and establishment of a special fund for the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, promoting the conservation of the critically endangered species.

In September 2022, under the guidance of Yancheng City Wetland and World Natural Heritage Conservation Management Centre, Dongtai Coastal Economic Development Zone Management Committee, and with the technical support of the Center for East Asian-Australasian Flyway Studies (CEAAF) of Beijing Forestry University, MCF collaborated with Ant Forest. After more than two years of efforts, Tiaozini successfully went online in Ant Forest, becoming the second wetland type of conservation site of Ant Forest. Ant Forest staff said “This campaign will attract about 8.75 million people to participate in the conservation of the Tiaozini wetland!” Ant Forest: <https://www.unep.org/championsofearth/laureates/2019/ant-forest>

### **Establishing in situ conservation team**

In protecting the important stop-over site of the Spoon-billed Sandpiper, we have set up a working station in Tiaozini to promote the work. We hope to join hands with the government, universities, research institutes and social organizations to carry out long-term cooperation and land-based projects in the areas of wetland conservation and restoration, monitoring and education.

### **Ecological monitoring**

In September and October during bird migration, bird surveys will be carried out and numbers of birds in Tiaozini are very impressive. In September, surveyors observed up to 920 Nordmann's Greenshanks, 20 Spoon-billed Sandpipers, 380 Eurasian Curlews, 225 Great Knots, and 200 Black-faced Spoonbills. During the October survey, surveyors observed 200 Saunders's Gulls, 291 Great Knots, and 216 Black-faced Spoonbills.

For the management of the high tide roost of Tiaozini, the Tiaozini Wetland Management Center, the CEAAF, and MCF, jointly developed the Rules for the Management of 720 Acres of High Tide Roost in 2021, hoping to provide migratory birds with the resting conditions and supplementary foraging grounds through the management of wetland habitats, and at the same time, through patrolling, observe the changes of human activities in the wetland ecosystem, monitor abnormal situation of wetland habitat and flora and fauna; discover poaching, logging, overgrazing and other acts of destruction of natural resources and investigate and collect evidence to ensure the safety of wetland ecology; publicise the relevant laws and regulations of nature reserves and national parks, management regulations of the custodial area and the main protection objects and core resources and their conservation value and importance.

### **Information Technology Construction**

In Tiaozini, we are building an automated patrol and monitoring system. In the process of carrying out patrol and monitoring work in the future, the automated system will help to collect, save and analyze more data comprehensively, such as: weather, tide, patrol and monitoring work will be carried out more efficiently.



## Tiaozini wetland management and citizen science seminar August 2022

Jing Li & Ziyu Yang, on behalf of Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China

In August 26-28 2022 the Dongtai Local Government, Beijing Forestry University CEAAF center and Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China organized a workshop for the management of the Tiaozini wetland on the west coast of the Yellow Sea. It is a critically important stopover site for migratory waterbirds on the East Asian-Australasian Flyway. It is also recognized as one of the most important moulting sites for the Critically Endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* and endangered Nordmann's Greenshank *Tringa guttifer*.

Before 2019, Tiaozini was a hotspot for birdwatchers and photographers to see Spoon-billed Sandpipers and many other shorebirds. Their records and especially photos of flagged shorebirds helped scientists understand the population size, population trend, and survival rate of the flagged species, which filled in the knowledge gap and contributed to more effective conservation. Birdwatchers and photographers also took great joy in learning about the story behind each and every flagged individual.

In 2019, in recognition of its global importance and irreplaceability to migratory waterbirds, Tiaozini was inscribed on the list of Migratory Bird Sanctuaries along the Coast of Yellow Sea-Bohai Gulf of China. While this is great news, access to Tiaozini has since become much harder. This is because Tiaozini is no longer just an “ordinary” wetland. It has become a popular heritage site co-managed by multiple parties including the local government, local heritage conservation & management center, Mangrove Wetlands Conservation Foundation (MCF), and several universities. To minimise accidents that they might be held liable for and to reduce management expenses, the management parties only allow visitors to tour a very restricted area of the entire heritage site.

As a result, in 2020 and 2021, nearly all resighting records at Tiaozini were submitted by a single person. Not surprisingly, the number of resighting



Group photo of Tiaozini Workshop in August 2022

records for Spoon-billed Sandpiper has become much lower, and we have no way of double-checking the records' quality.

To address this problem, we decided to hold this workshop. We've invited birdwatching associations, photographers, conservationists, as well as local government and other management parties of Tiaozini to attend. The workshop will create an opportunity for all stakeholders to discuss potential ways of letting birdwatchers and photographers back in Tiaozini. After all, birdwatchers and photographers played a key role in raising awareness of Tiaozini.

We'd also invited international scientists to share their ideas and contributions, e.g. share the different types of flags/rings that are given to shorebirds and what they mean, how flag resighting records helped reveal marvelous facts about shorebirds, how a protected area that you know of has successfully integrated citizen science with tourist management or anything else you think may be helpful for the participants.

The physical workshop will take place at Tiaozini. Lili Sun gave the opening talk followed by the party leader, Mr. Hongtao Lv, followed by Dr. Nigel Clark, Chris Hassle, Yu Yat Tung, Dec Chiang and Katherine Leung who gave presentations via Zoom.

## ICFC supported project update: 2021-2022

Sayam U. Chowdhury, Pyaephyo Aung, Kimmim Sinhaseni, Jing Li and Scott Hecker



*Celebrating World Migratory Day 2022 at Sonadia Island*

*Nazim Uddin Khan*

Since 2016, The International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC) has been supporting the Spoon-billed Sandpiper Task Force to carry out direct conservation work at the most important wintering areas in Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand and South China. The project employed local guards, helped to build temporary camps and the removal of illegal mist nets to protect shorebirds from hunting; as well as facilitated legal and sustainable livelihoods as an alternative to hunting, and helped establishing no-hunting bylaws among Village Conservation Groups with support from local governments and educating the local communities.

ICFC shorebird conservation landscapes across four Asian countries supported approximately 95,068 (58% higher than last year) waterbirds of 67 species including 89 Spoon-billed Sandpipers (34.8% increase to last year) in 2021–2022. These areas also supported globally endangered 291 Nordmann's Greenshanks (85 in 2020–21), 4,123 Great Knots

(2,079 in 2020–21) and 12,996 individuals of eight globally near-threatened species in 2021–2022.

During early 2021, Covid-19 related restrictions did not allow our project staff to carry out activities at different project sites. However, despite these difficulties, there has been some major progress in all four countries where ICFC operates through local partners.



*Bay of Bengal Survey*

*Sayam U. Chowdhury*





Conservation signboards at the Nanthar Island Ren Nou Soe



Illegal mist-nets were found in Beihai, South China and reported to the police



Ren Nou Soe training bird surveys and community-based site patrolling RBANCA



Zhanjiang BWS kicked off the National bird-love week in CunjinQiao Park in March 2022

Conservation work in Bangladesh mainly focused at Sonadia Island. Despite Covid-19 related travel restriction, the project carried out all activities including outreach events at local schools to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day 2022. Other Spoon-billed Sandpiper sites were also visited as part of the Bay of Bengal survey. Between October 2021 and March 2022, a minimum of six Spoon-billed Sandpiper comprising three flagged birds were seen at three sites in Bangladesh, of these four were seen on Sonadia Island.

During this period, Nature Conservation Society Myanmar (NCS) partnered with local NGO Rakhine Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (RBANCA), and hired two site guards

for regular patrolling and shorebird monitoring at Nanthar Island and its surrounding areas. RBANCA carried out monthly patrol around the island and did not observe any bird hunting. RBANCA team organized World Wetland Day event 2022 in collaboration with NCS and Forest Department at the Basic Education Middle School, Aung Daing Village, Sittwe Township in February 2022, where 20 teachers and 30 students participated. On 21 February 2022, Union Government announced Nanthar Island as a Marine National Park.

In South China, two monitoring officers were hired to conduct site-patrols as well as surveys at Guangdong and Guangxi. In coordination with Zhanjiang Birdwatching Society in Guangdong



Coastal erosion prevention using bamboo

BCST

Spoon-billed Sandpipers visiting Pak Thale-Laem Phak Bia in early March 2022  
BCST

and Liuzhou Birdwatching Society in Guangxi conducted site-patrols and reported mist nets to the local police. Only two mist nets (600 m) were found at Beihai, Guangxi in January 2022. There were significantly fewer hunting cases in the winter of 2021-2022. It is likely that COVID-19 pushed the governments to further control illegal hunting or wildlife trade in South China. Zhan-jiang Birdwatching Society organised national bird-love week in CunjinQiao Park in March 2022. More than 54,466 shorebirds including 76 Spoon-billed Sandpiper wintered at Guangdong and Guangxi provinces in 2021-2022. In May 2022, Liuzhou BWS organized a workshop targeting 50 local volunteers who are visiting key and potential SBS sites.

Bird Conservation Society of Thailand (BCST) conservation staff supported by ICFC worked to make sure that the nature reserve is fully protected and well managed in collaboration with local communities and local government agencies. Sea water and habitat management for shorebirds in BCST land have continued during the project period including a landscape-based plan. Additional shorebird roosting areas were created using sand dunes to increase safe roosting places for shorebirds. Monthly bird surveys were also continued despite the difficulties in traveling due

to the COVID-19 outbreak. The total of 5 Spoon-billed Sandpipers were observed at Pak Thale, including 2 flagged birds (Lime-green 77 and White P7).

### About the International Conservation Fund of Canada (ICFC)

ICFC was founded in 2007 to advance the long-term preservation of nature and biodiversity in the tropics and other priority areas worldwide. Its Shorebird Conservation Initiative was launched in 2015 with a focus on endangered, threatened, and declining shorebird populations primarily during their migratory non-breeding season. To date ICFC has invested over \$30 million toward its overall efforts in 34 countries in direct support of in-country non-profit organizations. For more information visit our website: [www.icfcanda.org](http://www.icfcanda.org).





## Why should we continue to record marked SBS?

Nigel Clark

After ten years of individually marking and resighting Spoon-billed Sandpiper we must know all we need to know“. This is a common question we get asked and it is completely understandable as we should only intervene in a birds life if there is a reason to do so.

In the last decade we have learnt a fantastic amount about the lives of so many individuals but we still have not found the reasons for their ongoing march towards extinction. Thanks to everyone's hard work it is much slower now than it was in the first decade of the century. But unless we can find out exactly what is going wrong we will be likely to lose this charismatic species by about 2035. So we do not have much time!

Every sighting and every photo gives us vital pieces

of information about the lives of individual birds and helps us work out where they go and how long they stay in different sites. We are beginning to get to the point that we can look at the chances of survival of birds that stop in different sites helping identify the sites where we need to concentrate our conservation effort.

Making linkages between sites visited by individual birds is incredibly important in the protection of sites. They make clear that the authorities that are responsible for sites, that they have an obligation to protect their birds but these birds are international travellers which are important to the people from many nations.

Recently we have been looking at what factors that affect the chances of survival of the birds that



*Yellow HU was flagged and satellite tagged on 6 October 2016 at Tiaozini, China. Due to size HU is presumed to be a female. She moved to Hangzhou Bay two days later on 8 October and then on to a site near Xitou in Guangdong Province on 24 October where she spent the winter until at least 10 April 2017. She was reported over 30 times all over China but not elsewhere on the flyway. It is not clear where if at all the bird is breeding*

have been head-started and one thing that we have done is to look at the survival chances of birds that are released at different ages. We expected to find that if we kept birds for a few days more they would have a better start and so survive better.

In fact the reverse is the case and releasing them a couple of days after they are able to fly, doubles their chances of surviving the first year of life. It was only possible to find this out by interrogating the database of records that the Task Force keeps.

Photos are of added value as we can check them to see if the birds are in good condition and moulting at the same times as previous years. Many of people who have taken fabulous photos have allowed the Task Force to use them in various ways to highlight the plight of Spoon-billed Sandpiper at all levels of society. There is nothing better to get the message across of the international importance of these birds than a picture of the bird on the breeding grounds next to one on its wintering area.

The international effort is amazing there are over 400 individuals and organisations that have submitted records and there are now some 2,000 individual records of marked birds in the database.

The amount of time it takes to gather this much data is immense and shows the dedication of so many people to help save this iconic species. There are lots more to learn but every sighting or photo helps us understand a bit more about the lives of these birds and will help us change their fortunes before it is too late. Equally important are sightings of birds that are not flagged, especially now as marked and unmarked birds are almost equal and the proportion of flagged and unflagged birds gives crucial clues on the state of the population.

So, the message is clear, every sighting and photo will give an extra piece of information to help save Spoon-billed Sandpiper for future generations.



*White EH is a head-started male bird from 2020, which spent the first winter on Leizhou Pensinsula, Guangdong and was detected twice in spring 2021 in Tiaozini and returning to Guangdong for the last winter. In 2022 it returned to Meinypilgyno and bred with F 49 successfully and is now back at the Leizhou Peninsula in S China*



## From the Archives

### 20 years ago – Chukchi Sea coast 2002

Christoph Zöckler



20 years ago searching for Spoon-billed Sandpiper on the Chukchi Sea coast. From left: Pavel Tomkovich (concealed), Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, vesdekhod driver Andrey, local reindeer vet Oleg and Christoph Zöckler



Dinner in the shelter of the vesdekhod: Chris Kelly, Minoru Kashiwagi, Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, Elena Lappo and Christoph Zöckler



Weiting Liu



## News in brief

### Great Britain

The COVID Pandemic stopped the British Birdfair that was running for over 30 years in 2020 and 2021. When in 2022 the worst of the pandemic seemed to have passed and public events were possible again the Birdfair became a possibility again. However, the birding community appeared divided. Several organisations felt that the concept of huge public gatherings, promoting global tourism and long haul flights were no longer sustainable in a changing world. Others still felt strongly about the Birdfair spirits, promoting global bird tourism and a new alliance was quickly formed and emerged as the Global Birdfair. Our long-term supporter 'Wildsounds' invited us to join and as we were several of our TF in country we agreed.

Sayam Chowdhury, who stayed in Cambridge for his PhD joined me for two days and Nigel Clark



SBS species champion



Birdfair stand hosted by Species Champion 'Wildsounds'



Vivian Fu and nephew (left) with SBS and Black-faced Spoonbill tattoo!

assisted on the Friday! Several other members joined our stand briefly, incl. Vivian Fu from the EAAFP secretariat together with twin sister and nephew; also Tragopan founder and SBS supporter Jonathan Martinez from France as well as Naing Lin from Myanmar, Nan Thar expedition member in 2009, who studied in Canterbury at the time. CZ

Ad





## News in brief

### Myanmar

#### Nan Thar Island

Male SBS Lime 27 (King of the flyway!) returned to Nan Thar island on 7 Nov 2022 for the eight consecutive winter (Ren Noe Soe). This bird was ringed as a chick by Nikolai Yakushev in a replacement nest of famous 'monument' male 01 (see newsletter 13, Feb 2015) and female 02 on 15 July 2013, but got the ELF Lime 27 by Pavel Tomkovich only on 2 July 2015 when he was discovered nesting paired with female Lime 30 in Meinypilgyno area near his birth place for the first time. The following year the male bred at the same site with female Lime 31. In 2017 his territory was flooded and he remained solitary. In 2018, this male moved into moraine hills where he was nesting with female 05, the Queen of the flyway, till 2020; however, female Lime E3 joined him there in 2021. The observation of male Lime 27 in early June 2022 was exactly on the same territory, but his previous female Lime E3 moved away for a couple of kilometers for breeding with a new male (marked later as Lime 94). Solitary males remain to be active in display flights through most of June, but we were unable to find male Lime 27 on his territory during several visits after 5 June in 2022 and we assume it has been breeding without us finding nest or broods.

### Russia

Dr **Elena Lappo** is now SBS focal point for Russia.



### China

#### Worrying news from Zhejiang Province

A huge solar panel plant has been erected on the mudflats not far a sighting of SBS Lime 34 in 2021 Spring. It will be difficult for SBS and other waders to circumvent the densely covered panels. There have been solar farms on recently reclaimed coastal sites but not seen on intertidal mudflats

*SBS in China*



### Thailand

New SBS focal point: **Khwankhao Sinhaseni** (Kim-mim) is our new focal point for the SBS Task Force.



## SBS in Arts

### Natalia Emelchenko: Long Lonely Transects and SBS Drawing

Elena Lappo on behalf of SBS TF Team



*Coffee break on Vaamochka Lake, 2020*

*Julia Darkova*

**EL Natalia, please briefly introduce yourself, how you started your work with birds, tell about your experience, and hobbies.**

NE I finished Lomonosov Moscow State University majoring in biology and after graduation I got interested in birds. My research was aimed at White-fronted Goose. For many years, I would spend the whole field season in the Arctic part of Western Siberia in autonomous expeditions with the duration of up to 4.5 months. These expeditions are what I am keen on. I have always enjoyed the independence, the possibility to stop, pitch the tent, stay in that place for a month... or two and properly observe. Unfortunately, adulthood is inevitably connected with growing responsibility, which makes it impossible to go into such a

lengthy isolation. My expeditions are less long these days, but I am still happy to go on them.

**When did you start drawing birds and other animals? Do you remember your first experience?**

In my school years I went to Art classes but we did not draw animals, obviously (but we did draw spheres, pyramids and gypsum busts) but during school lessons I used to constantly draw with a pen on the margins of my notebooks. These were mostly pictures of dogs and horses as back then I also went horse riding and was crazy about horses. So, it could be said that animals were one of my first objects. Later, in the lengthy autonomous expeditions to the Gydan peninsula, I did graphic drawings. These, perhaps, were my first drawings



of birds. Apart from landscapes, the drawings depicted the objects of my scientific research — White-fronted Geese, their habitats, nests, the young.

**Where did you first see Spoon-billed Sandpiper or heard or maybe read about it?**

For the first time, I, just like many of my contemporaries, saw Spoon-billed Sandpiper on the drawing depicted on the 1982 postage stamp. The unusual beak of this bird remained in my memory for a long time. The second meeting happened during long conversations with Andrey Maksimov, an active participant in expeditions to Meinyipilgyno. In the last few years, on his return from Chukotka, Andrey, really passionate with the idea of restoring the population of the species, talked vividly about Spoon-billed Sandpiper, success of egg incubation, work of expedition, life of the expedition crew. So I got a general idea of how the expedition works long before I took part in one.

**Great to hear that the story about our BirdsRussia expedition in Chukotka and our study and conservation work on SBS becomes widely known... And great that you can finally took part in it... Now, tell me, please — how, when and where did you draw the first Spoon-billed Sandpiper?**



Fascinated and impressed by Andrey's stories I made a picture of a Spoon-billed Sandpiper family with acrylic paint on a children's pink T-shirt in May 2017. Back then I only saw Spoon-billed Sandpipers in photos and the picture was definitely far from perfect. The next paintings were made after seeing the bird with my own eyes.

**What is the most remarkable story connected with Spoon-billed Sandpiper?**

The most fascinating encounter happened on July 3, 2021. In spring of 2021, getting ready for my first Sandpiper expedition, I avidly read the issues of the bulletin and masterfully-written detective story about the life and adventures of Lime 07 stuck in my memory (the description of intense 19-hour wait for the signal will leave nobody indifferent). It was this article that formed the image of Spoon-billed Sandpiper in my head — of a small but brave and freedom-loving bird. I do not remember my first encounter with Spoon-billed Sandpiper but I suppose that something flew out from under my feet and swiftly disappeared in the fog. The next few encounters were probably the same.

But July 3 was different. I was walking along the route located in tundra, the route which is tradi-



tionally not bird-rich and thus quite dull. I was starting to get bored when I suddenly heard a voice. Not just a voice, but the cherished “wheet” — the dream song! For if you have heard the voice, the deal is almost done. I looked closer and soon saw the terracotta beauty with a green tag on the leg. It was impossible to read the number from afar, I froze with binoculars and began waiting, step by step the decorated male was getting closer... I saw a 7... another couple of steps and I could clearly read “07”! I was astounded! It was as if I encountered an old acquaintance, whose heroic feats were described in a novel, nonchalantly walking among the hillocks and sitting on the nest only 10 metres away from me! What an encounter!

**Yes, indeed, it is very exciting, when the heroes from the paper books and from the internet become real ones. I am personally very much moved to see the same SBS in Arctic on their breeding grounds and in tropic areas in China, Myanmar, Thailand etc...where they migrate to spend winter... Please, tell us more, what does your work in Chukotka involve? What do you like about it?**

My work in Chukotka is to conduct on-foot transect counts of all species of birds on the constant count routes. I love walking and this job suits me well. Apart from Spoon-billed Sandpiper, I encounter and register all its neighbours, friends and enemies. On the repeated routes I recognise familiar birds (but not larks and pipits, I do not succeed in recognizing them even in the end of the season) and note what they manage and do not manage in this nesting season. Moreover, transect counts of more than 600 km per season provide rich material on nesting success of different groups of birds, which is impossible to collect working on a stationary basis with a limited number of birds.

**Coming back to the main heroes. Why do you think it is important to save Spoon-billed Sandpiper?**

I value this work predominantly as an experiment. Amidst rising human-induced impact, we face gradual decrease of biodiversity. I want to believe that if we manage to make a joint effort together with different specialists from different countries, we will be able to stop it. Spoon-billed Sandpiper is a symbol of the fight for saving the planet. Could we win it?

**What do you think, what can artists and sculptors contribute to bird conservation in general and Spoon-billed Sandpiper in particular?**

Many people live in cities, drive from home to work and have no idea that there is something else beyond this route. The aim of the artist is to show the beauty of diversity. Putting on the T-shirt with a Spoon-billed Sandpiper, my friends learned for the first time about the existence of this bird, its struggle to survive, the problems of the decrease of the number of species on the planet and that in our region there are birds in need of protection and that the same could happen to other species if we do not start to treat the environment with care.





## The last Page

### A new Calidris!



For once we have some very good news for you all. The proud parents, our very Jodie and Egor report that Olga Calidris Loktionova-Clements was born in the evening of the 24th of July!

I am sure all of you will join us in welcoming the new member of the Task Force (mostly busy in distracting two of our key members from doing less important SBS conservation work ;- ) and wishing the happy family all the best.

