

New Issue: January 2020

By Emma Muench, 10th December 2019

Our [January 2020](#) issue shines a spotlight on bird conservation! The special section, [Editorial](#) and [Briefly](#) all focus on a range of threatened avifauna and the conservation issues they face. All contents in the January issue are freely available throughout 2020.

Bird Conservation

- Is Gurney's pitta *Hydrornis gurneyi* on the brink of extinction? - [Shwe et al.](#) - See Fauna & Flora International's news piece [here](#)
- Recent changes in the number of spoon-billed sandpipers *Calidris pygmaea* wintering on the Upper Gulf of Mottama in Myanmar - [Aung et al.](#)
- Modelling occurrence probability of the Endangered green peafowl *Pavo muticus* in mainland South-east Asia: applications for landscape conservation and management - [Sukumal et al.](#)
- The sarolga: conservation implications of genetic and visual evidence for hybridization between the brolga *Antigone rubicunda* and the Australian sarus crane *Antigone antigone gillae* - [Nevard et al.](#) - Read our blog [here](#)
- Using climate change models to inform the recovery of the western ground parrot *Pezoporus flaviventris* - [Molloy et al.](#)
- Developing biodiversity indicators for African birds - [Wotton et al.](#)
- Low abundance of the Endangered timneh parrot *Psittacus timneh* in one of its presumed strongholds - [Valle et al.](#)
- Illegal trade of the Psittacidae in Venezuela - [Sánchez-Mercado et al.](#)
- Predator visits to acclimatization pens: implications for the soft-release of gallinaceous birds - [Keiter & Ruzicka](#)



Behind the cover The remaining large patches of lowland forest in Tanintharyi, southern Myanmar, are the last global stronghold for the Endangered Gurney's pitta. Except for a few individuals, the remaining population is now restricted to this forest. Recent surveys relocated the species in only a few of the locations where it was detected during 2003–2012; in all other locations the forest had been cleared. Protection of remaining lowland forest is now critical. Although the expansion of oil palm cultivation has slowed, two proposed national parks, which would potentially offer legal protection for most of the remaining Gurney's pitta habitat, remain on hold because of political uncertainties. To save this bird from extinction an alternative conservation approach is required, based on an Indigenous Community Conserved Area model. For further details, click [here](#). (Photograph © Wang Thammachatudom/Shutterstock.com)

Editorial [Action before certainty for Africa's European migrant birds](#) by Juliet Vickery and Bill Adams

'Put simply, developing and implementing initiatives to stem population declines requires knowing whether they are driven by changes in breeding success or survival. For most migrant passerines we are struggling to provide this information—but why? Firstly, these small migrant passerines represent a broad suite of ecologically different species, including aerial foragers such as the swift and swallow, woodland birds such as the nightingale and pied flycatcher, and open country species such as the whinchat and yellow wagtail, suggesting the declines are unlikely to be driven by a single common factor. Secondly, these species have complex life cycles, traversing vast tracts of the globe and using multiple sites and habitats. Thirdly, outside the breeding season these species occur in low densities over huge areas of Sub Saharan Africa, a challenging environment for which we have little understanding of the activities that influence land use and land-use change.'



Brolga and Australian sarus crane. Photos: Tim Nevard

Editor's picks

- Combining local knowledge and occupancy analysis for a rapid assessment of the forest elephant *Loxodonta cyclotis* in Cameroon's timber production forests - [Brittain et al.](#)
- Estimating the population size of migrating Tibetan antelopes *Pantholops hodgsonii* with unmanned aerial vehicles - [Hu et al.](#)
- Is captive breeding a priority for manatee conservation in Mexico? [Ortega-Argueta & Castelblanco-Martínez](#)
- A process for assessing and prioritizing species conservation needs: going beyond the Red List - [Johnson et al.](#)

Conservation News

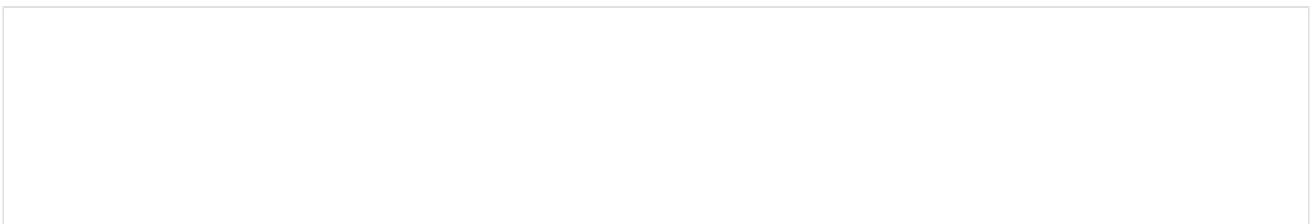
- [The Tony Whitten Conservation Prize 2019](#)
- Beef cattle as grassland management tool and economic resource in Transylvania, Romania - [Ackeroyd & Page](#)
- Testing the IUCN Green List of Species - [Stephenson et al.](#)
- Thailand holds its first Parks Congress - [McNeely et al.](#)
- Illegal trade in Indonesia's National Rare Animal has moved online - [Nijman et al.](#)
- One swallow does not make a summer, but could a Laysan albatross pair make a colony at Natividad Island, Mexico? - [Albores-Barajas et al.](#)
- Declining water birds are still on the list of game species in Eastern Europe - [Kitowski](#)
- Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into development cooperation—highlights from a recent ALTER-NET-EKLIPSE workshop - [Hugé et al.](#)
- Join the ConservationNOW network - [Migné](#)



Winners of the first Tony Whitten Conservation Prize (more information about the prize [here](#)). Top row, left to right: Ayu Savitri Nurinsiyah, Evan Quah Seng Huat and Junn Kitt Foon. Bottom row, left to right: Ming-Kai Tan, Nattawadee Nantararat and Weixin Liu.

Publications

- [Rewilding](#)
- [Invasive Aliens: the Plants and Animals from Over There that Are Over Here](#)





Emma Muench

Emma joined the Oryx team in 2018, having previously completed a BSc in Geography at the University of Sussex and an MSc in Conservation Science at Imperial College London. She has a keen interest in marine conservation and has experience working on sea turtle, coral reef, and tropical fish monitoring projects. Her previous research includes an ethological study on the impact of human enrichment on the welfare of captive giant Pacific octopus, and an investigation into the barriers to increased conservation involvement in European zoos.