



From the Arctic to the Tropics

It was a beginning to transboundary cooperation at the BNHS conference on wetlands and migratory waterbirds

Pune, November 21: The more we learn about birds, the more we understand that the less we know about them. In spite of the beautiful science, there are bird related concerns that we are yet to understand and learn, not just for policy making but addressing some pressing issues, both at the national and international level. The conference on wetlands and migratory waterbirds that started on the 18th of November and will continue until 22nd November, is a small step by BNHS in creation of a better habitat for the ambassadors of the sky.

The Arctic region hosts some of the most beautiful birds and animals in spite of the harsh climatic conditions. Evgeny Syroechkovskiy, PhD is the Deputy Director of All-Russian Institute for Nature Conservation (ARRINC) All-Russian Research Institute for Nature Conservation, and he migrated to India on Day 3 of the International conference. He gave an overview of the role of Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) which is a biodiversity working group and highlighted the decline of shore birds like Great Knot, Red Knot and Bar-tailed Godwit in the East Asian-Australasian flyway and the American flyway. To address habitat degradation and overharvesting of resources, the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) was formed. Dr Evgeny suggested, ‘Designing Curlew Sandpiper Action Plan and addressing poaching issue at the key Arctic shorebirds sites in India’ as the way forward for initiating AMBI activities in India.

The other interesting sessions held yesterday were, ‘Conserving non-protected wetlands in the CAF’, ‘Bird strike and Site Sensitivity Mapping’ and ‘Conserving non-protected wetlands in the CAF’ among others. Abstracts of all the sessions during the 5-day conference shall soon be available in the special issue of the Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society Volume 118 (2020). There is a special workshop on ‘Advancing AMBI implementation in the Indian subcontinent’ today at Fariyas Resort, Lonavala. On the spot registrations shall begin at 9 am.

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