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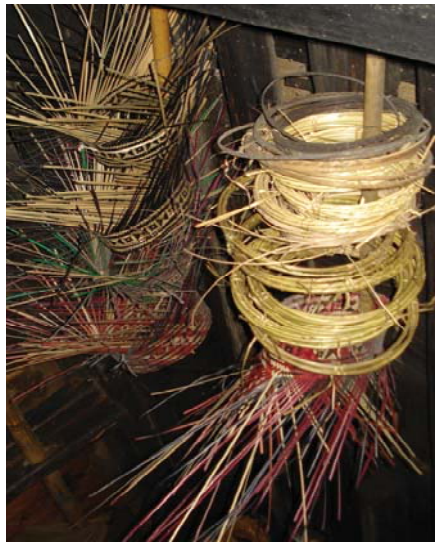
## Reviving "RANGZHIN" newsletter of RSPN

Henceforth, the quarterly newsletter of the RSPN will now be titled "Rangzhin", reviving the title used in the past.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

The organization received grants from South South Corporation supported by Netherlands for the Clean Bhutan program. RSPN will closely work with all the relevant stakeholders from Bhutan in addressing issue of solid waste management.

## Socio-economic survey in Wamrong-Kangpara



> Local bamboo product

Wamrong and Kangpara under Wamrong and Thrimshing Dungkhag (sub districts) respectively in Trashigang district is located in the broadleaf forest zone with high diversity of faunal and floral species. It is also one of the only two sites in the world that supports western sub-species of the Blyth's tragopan (*Tragopan blythii* Molesworthii). The area is also home for more the 10,000 inhabitants who sustain their livelihoods on subsistence farming and significantly relying on forest re-

sources. However, over the last few years heavy forest resource harvesting and unsustainable forest management practices has caused degradation of forest resources in the area, especially the bamboo species *Neomicrocalamus andropogonifolius* locally known as "ringshu". This has adversely affected the traditionally popular bamboo artisans and the handicraft business is dwindling.

In 2007, RSPN initiated a Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program in Wamrong and Kangpara. With the establishment of a field office in Wamrong, a preliminary study was conducted based on which four villages in Kangpara and Lumang gewog were selected for first socio-economic and biodiversity surveys. As a preliminary activity, socio-economic survey was carried out in the four villages in Kangpara and Lumang gewog in early January 2008. The villages include Passangphu, Maduwa in Kangpara and Moshi and Khaimanma in Lumang Gewog. A team consisting of 9 members from RSPN carried out the survey from 9th to 20 January 2008.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was carried out by forming a group of about 14 participants from each village

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## RSPN staff retreat 2008



> RSPN retreat in session

The annual RSPN staff retreat was organized from March 3 to March 7, 2008 in Punakha. On this occasion RSPN conducted an organizational assessment, staff performance appraisal and other outdoor activities such as camping, bird watching, team building activities. The organizational assessment was conducted for two days. A two day workshop discussed and debated on various capabilities of organizational

capacity and four dimensions of performance. The outcomes of the workshop will help RSPN better understand and prioritize key strengths and improvement opportunities, upon which the plans can be created. It will also facilitate the improvement, alignment, and integration of overall organizational effectiveness and

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## Socio-economic survey in Wamrong-Kangpara

representing elderly men, women and youth participated in the exercises. Tools like village mapping, village history, problem analysis, wealth ranking, seasonal calendar, forest threats analysis, Venn diagram and transect walk were used during the exercises. The participants actively participated with lot of eagerness and interest. Some of the participants mentioned that it was the first time they had such an opportunity to discuss wide range of issues concerning their livelihood and their environment. This was a learning experience for both RSPN team as well as the local people which allowed the team to gather wide

range of information. Although the data on socio-economic survey at three levels is being analyzed, some of the common problems identified and ranked in high impact order in the area included insufficient/ lack of proper drinking water facility, decreased soil fertility, lack of road, insufficient medical facility including inadequate health workers, low food productivity, deforestation, depletion of bamboo resource including Ringshu, wildlife crop damage/ livestock predation, insufficient livestock fodder, and decrease in water quality and quantity.

## Bhutan sees expanding opportunities for Socially Responsible Business



> *CSR Workshop participants*

Experts from seven SAARC countries came together on 28th January with 50 representatives from trade, industry and civil society at the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry to conduct the country's first Introductory Workshop on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The workshop participants included representatives from the Royal government, private business associations, multilateral agencies, Civil Society Organizations, media and members of the South Asia Forum of Responsible Business (SAFoRB). Inaugurating the workshop DASHO NADO RINCHHEN, the Honourable Deputy Minister of the National Environment Commission, encouraged Bhutanese entrepreneurs to take advantage of opportunities emerging from the global trend towards transparent and ethically driven business practices. He said the Royal Government is among the few in the world that encourage social responsibility by legislating limits to the exploitation of natural resources and ensuring that all new projects undergo environmental assessment.

The presentation session included nine presentations of which five presentations were delivered by the participants from other SAARC, and the remaining four presentations by the organizations/associations in Bhutan. The presentations informed the participants about the concept of CSR, how it works in other SAARC countries and its current situation in Bhutan

Dr. Lam Dorji, Executive Director of the Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (RSPN), and a founder member of the SAFoRB said, "It is RSPN's pleasure to host the country's first CSR workshop along with the Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) with support from Partners in Change, India. By linking into a regional network such as SAFoRB, Bhutan can share our own unique development philosophy of Gross National Happiness, and also bring our business practices in line with learning from outside." SAFoRB is a civil society initiative of organizations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Opening the workshop, SAFoRB founding members, Ms. Ambreen Waheed, Executive Director, Responsible Business Initiative-Pakistan and Mr. Rajiv Pradhan, Manager Katalyst-Bangladesh, shared their respective experience in building CSR organizations in a number of countries. Ms. Waheed, introducing the concept of the "triple Bottom-Line" whereby companies document and monitor their social, environmental and financial performance said, "CSR meshes well with GNH to generate larger benefit." Mr. Pradhan said, "There is a strong business case for CSR. Companies can demonstrate that responsibility pays dividends".

Mr. Viraf Mehta, Chief Executive of Partners in Change, India said, "CSR is now quite clearly understood as a manage-

ment concept that enhances business competitiveness for the whole country. Businesses now actively seek ways to become socially and environmentally responsible". He dwelt in detail on a number of CSR initiatives within the SAARC region as well as in industrialized societies. Moderating the first technical session, RBI's Dr. Faiz Shah presented a discussion framework for panellists from SAARC nations to share their unique experiences of CSR in action as a driver of competitiveness. Panelists included Mr. Iftekar Ahmad, CEO of the CSR Centre-Bangladesh, Mr. Rajan Gandhi, Society in Action Group-India, Mr. Saffah Farooq, Bluepeace-Maldives, Mr. Rajiv Pradhan representing Nepal, Ms. Ambreen Waheed, RBI-Pakistan, and Mr. P. Muttulingam, Institute of Social-Sri Lanka.

In an attempt to provide Bhutanese perspective of CSR, Mr. Chandra Chettri of BCCI, Mr. Chukey Wangchuk of Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation, Mr. Pema Wangda, Director general of the Department of Labor, and Pema Gyalpo of Tarayana Foundation made presentations on businesses, environmental, labor, and social aspects of CSR in Bhutan. Many participants including business representatives considered the workshop an eye opener. The Bhutan Chamber of Commerce and Industry was identified as an appropriate organization that could spearhead CSR activities and ensure the ethical business practices in Bhutan. Establishment of a CSR partnership group was also recommended as the next step.

The workshop concluded successfully with words of appreciation and thanks to participants, organizers and resources persons by Mr. Phub Tshering, Secretary General of BCCI. The workshop was primarily financed by Partner in Change, India and co-financing from RSPN under support from UNDP Bhutan and the BCCI contributed venue and human resource support. The workshop was a joint initiative of the RSPN and BCCI.

The meeting was followed by the second SAFoRB steering committee meeting held in Hotel Dragon Roots on 29th January, 2008.

## Winter workshop for nature club focal teachers

The Environment Education Unit in collaboration with Ministry of Education organized two five-day training workshops for the school Nature Club Coordinators at Bajo HSS in Wangdiphodrang and Gyalposhing HSS, Mongar. Focal nature club coordinators from nineteen Dzongkhags attended the week long workshop. The workshops were conducted under a project to strengthen local capacity for environmental conservation funded by UNDP, Bhutan.

The workshops were organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Education

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## RSPN staff retreat 2008



> *RSPN staff enjoying Doegor*

capabilities assisting in the delivery of ever-improving value to an organization's stake-

holders and beneficiaries.

Furthermore the assessment was also aimed at facilitating organizational and personal learning, and to monitor progress over time. Staff performance appraisal was introduced and practiced for integration into regular process of RSPN. The staff performance assessment includes self assessment of employee achievements against predetermined objectives to which the supervisor may agree or disagree allowing for opportunities to make improvements and foster self understanding of the staff.

Camps were set on the beautiful bank of Phochhu River. In the afternoon men staff played Doe-

gor, while women enjoyed the beautiful landscape alongside the river. All were together to enjoy games, dances and singing around camp fire in the evening. The staff also enjoyed hot stone bath, which is a traditionally cleaning and healing activity.

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## Winter workshop for nature club focal teachers

with the following objectives:

- To introduce to participants the RSPN's the Environmental Education programs and the Ministry of Education's policy on Plan for Environment Education.
- To build capacity for participants to establish Nature Clubs, and plan and manage nature club activities in schools.
- To introduce to participants prospective sources of funding for Nature Club and environmental project proposal development.
- To raise awareness for participant on general environmental issues in Bhutan

and the functions and importance of nature club activities in school.

- To get inputs into the development of the Nature Club Handbook and Management Manual
- The participants actively participated in the workshops and had immensely contributed comments and recommendations for the improvement of the nature club activity hand book and the management manual. The workshop had also benefitted the participants and had equipped them with knowledge and skills in conducting conservation activities and managing nature club in schools.

## Training on Important Bird Area (IBA) for RSPN staff



> *Training in session*

To meet RSPN's mission- "inspiring personal responsibility", RSPN in collaboration with BirdLife International, has been implementing a project "Building Grassroots Civil Society for Biodiversity Conservation in Bhutan" funded by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). The project aims to establish Local Conservation Support Groups (LCSG) across the country to support RSPN's efforts

for the conservation of Bhutan's environment.

The LCSG will monitor some of the endangered bird species in the identified "Important Bird Area" (IBA) within the country and generate data and information that can be used for educational purposes. The group will also conduct activities to identify local environmental issues and come up with measures to address the issues. The LCSG

### NEWS IN BRIEF



Ms. Rebecca Pradhan, an ecologist with RSPN received Khoshoo Memorial Award, 2008 for her conservation works in Bhutan. The award was handed over to her on 24th March in New Delhi, India by the Ashoka Trust for Research and Environment (ATREE). It recognizes her efforts in biodiversity conservation in the Himalyan Kingdom of Bhutan. It is an annual event sponsored by ATREE, the Ford Foundation, and the Institute of Rural Research and Development Programme. It comprise a cash prize of one lakh Rupees and a plaque.

will also work closely with school nature clubs and the non-formal education centers.

Mr. Mike Crosby from BirdLife International facilitated a 4 day training workshop for RSPN project staff. During the training workshop, techniques on monitoring the IBA, methods to collect data and how to analyze data were taught. There was discussion on the overall management of the project and the kind of support required by RSPN for the project.

The training workshop was found to be useful for the project staff particularly on the monitoring of IBA.

The world Environment Day, commemorated each year on 5 June is one of the principal vehicles through which the united Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action.

**Earth Hour 2008**

On March 31 2007, for one hour, Sydney made a powerful statement about the greatest contributor to global warming – coal-fired electricity – by turning off its lights. Over 2.2 million Sydney residents and over 2,100 businesses switched off, leading to a 10.2% energy reduction across the city. What began as one city taking a stand against global warming caught the attention of the world.

In 2008, 24 global cities participated in Earth Hour at 8pm on March 29. Earth Hour is the highlight of a major campaign to encourage businesses, communities and individuals to take the simple steps needed to cut their emissions on an ongoing basis. It is about simple changes that will collectively make a difference – from businesses turning off their lights when their offices are empty, to households turning off appliances rather than leaving them on standby.

Source: <http://www.earthhour.org>

**Phobjikha Community to translate waste awareness into action**



Ever since the cleanup campaign on 4th August 2007 the communities of Phobjikha have agreed taking responsibility for proper waste management in the valley. During one of the gewog meetings, the community of the Gangtey gewog agreed to conduct a cleaning campaign once every four months while the main business area near the Gangtey monastery will be done the next day after every auspicious days. So far the communities have done a valley cleanup once in December and in April. The clean up day starts at 8:00 a.m. till they complete the cleanup in the areas they are responsible for. Presently a member from every household in the villages joins to collectively clean their village surrounding and trails. The villages are also given responsibility to clean a section of the main road. It is evident that the people are now giving more importance to the rising waste issues in the valley, according to the Gup (gewog head) he says that cleanup will be carried out once three months.

One positive aspect about waste management system in Phobjikha Conservation Area is the practice of scrap collection by some local scrap dealers. Due to this some of the local

**World Water Day celebrated**



The World Water Day 2008 was observed in Goenshari community primary school, Punakha on 28th March 2008. The day which was to be celebrated on 22nd March was postponed to 24th March due to National Assembly elections in the country. The World Water Day 2008 coincided with the International Year of Sanitation (IYS). Bhutan Water Partnership (BhWP) sponsored the celebration with a support fund of Nu. 20,000. The prime objective of celebrating the event was to create awareness amongst the local community of the Goenshari Gewog and the school children of whom ninety percent came from the locality. The awareness program highlighted the importance of sanitation, women and children and the scarcity of clean water supply. It also interpreted the importance of watershed management, local forest conservation and the attitude of the common people on proper waste management.

About 400 people including school children, local people, Gewog (block) officials, local leaders, and teachers gathered to witness the program arranged by the school children. The guests included the Asst. District Education Officer, the Gup and the Secretary, BhWP.

communities have started to realize the benefits from saving certain wastes generated in the household. Every twice or thrice in a year some scrap dealers visits the villages looking for unwanted wastes from rubber, tins and bottles. The wastes that the scrap dealers get to buy are unwanted rubber boots, broken buckets and metal products like old bukharis and pots, etc.

people to become active agents of sustainable and equitable development; promote an understanding that communities are pivotal to changing attitudes towards environmental issues; and advocate partnership, which will ensure all nations and peoples enjoy a safer and more prosperous future.

**Upcoming World Environment Day 2008**

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Another resolution, adopted by the General Assembly the same day, led to the creation of UNEP.

The World Environment Day slogan for 2008 is Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy. Recognising that climate change is becoming the defining issue of our era, UNEP is asking countries, companies and communities to focus on greenhouse gas emissions and how to reduce them. The World Environment Day will highlight resources and initiate objectives that promote low carbon economies and life-styles, such as improved energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, forest conservation and eco-friendly consumption.

The main international celebrations of World Environment Day 2008 will be held in New Zealand.

The day's agenda is to give a human face to environmental issues; empower

**NEWS IN BRIEF**



>> Dr. Lam Dorji receiving books from H.E. Dr. Sudhir Vyas

The organization received a set of books from the Indian Ambassador, Dr. Sudhir Vyas. The books were received by the Executive Director, Dr. Lam Dorji on behalf of the organization in India House. It consisted of many references of importance to environmental conservation.



## Kuensel reported death of the nine black-necked cranes in Phobjikha: Some views

The article by Kuensel titled “Nine cranes killed by unknown predator” and opinions expressed in its online forum all deserve appreciation for generating public interest and concern for crane conservation. The reported loss of nine cranes is, no doubt, a matter of concern for RSPN, the Department of Forest, and the general public. Therefore, it is our obligation to provide answers to the questions raised. Before we provide our explanations to the situation explained in the article, we would like to thank all those who have expressed concerns and for taking conservation dear to their hearts.

Black-necked Cranes have been migrating in and out of Bhutan since time immemorial. Their arrivals have always been a source of joy for many farmers, while their departure leave behind a sense loss, but their deaths in the past were hardly noticed. Ever since the establishment of RSPN in 1987, the number of the annual arrival of the cranes was monitored and recorded. However, it was not until the inception of the Integrated Conservation and Development Program (ICDP) in 1999 that a substantive scientific study on the cranes has been carried out (on the ecology and migration patterns of the cranes).

Over the last decade, the annual arrival of the cranes in Phobjikha valley has been steadily increasing from less than 200 to now over 300 birds. With the increasing arrival of the cranes in the valley, it has been observed that each winter the size of the natural roosting site became relatively smaller. Earlier, cranes in Phobjikha used to roost in shallow water. Cranes are known to roost in water to escape from terrestrial predators. The splashing sounds from an approaching predator enable the birds roosting in water to escape. With the roosting area in Phobjikha having undergone natural modification due to sedimentation, the artificially created pond proved

relatively smaller as annual arrivals increased from 200 to over 300 now. Many birds are forced to roost on dry frozen ground on the periphery of the pond or opt for alternative roosts where predators can tackle them more easily than those roosting in water.

The loss of prey to predator is a natural occurrence in the wild. Such happenings are not new to the cranes as a prey species. What is new is the availability of information on such occurrences, with the increasing role of media and people’s access to media. Loss of individual cranes by predation has been recorded in Phobjikha last year and earlier too. Similar losses have been reported in the past in other habitats around the world. Recent reports from other habitats account loss of cranes to power line collisions, which is of more concern than losses to natural predators. In that context, loss of cranes to natural predators is an indicator of a vibrant ecosystem that is under human vigilance.

In same context, the deaths of nine cranes by natural predation and not by disease are not a cause for alarm. Experts explain such processes as ‘normal’ where weaker individuals from the population are withdrawn, thereby strengthening the gene pool of the surviving population. However, the loss of such a number from a population of endangered species is certainly a matter of concern. RSPN, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture has seized every opportunity to screen the blood and carcasses of cranes for diseases. Necessary vigilance for unnatural occurrences is being undertaken by the concerned agencies like the Department of Forest, the Department of Livestock and Animal Husbandry, and Bhutan Agriculture and Food Regulatory Authority (BAFRA). RSPN, in collaboration with these agencies is also contributing to screening of blood and

carcasses for bird flu virus. As of now, a few samples have been tested by the veterinary center of the Ministry of Agriculture and results have been found to be negative.

The level of attention given to the issue shows how aware and concerned Bhutanese are in relation to conservation of biodiversity and the environment. The Forest Department has responded by sending an independent team to investigate. The general conclusion is that, such predation may be acceptable as natural if it occurs within certain limits, after which management options with expert guidance need to be explored. The good news is that the predation has not persisted. The identification of the predator remains a priority, which will be done through scat analysis and continued vigilance in the habitat by concerned agencies.

Meanwhile, some questions remain to be answered. What is the predator? Why is predation an issue now than in the past? What are the management options? Can we assume the revival of rare predators such as the wild dogs (Dhole)? Could it be the domestic dogs that have been noted to inflict danger on cranes in other crane habitats around the world? Could it be the yellow throated marten? Or could it be the wild cat? A possible answer lies in the scat that has been collected for analysis. RSPN and the Ministry of Agriculture will continue to work together on these unanswered questions.

When it comes to reporting threats of bird flu, it will require multiple agencies and individuals to be vigilant. It is the responsibility of every agency and individual to report signs of occurrences to the concerned authority. RSPN will do its part!

*Field Report, Phobjikha*

## Four percent of the Black-necked crane winters in Bhutan

Of the estimated 11000 numbers of rare Black-necked cranes in the world, Bhutan receives over 450 birds annually. Spread over the country, the crane winters in the valleys of Phobjikha and Khotokha in the west, Bumthang in central and Bomdeling in the far east of the country. Of these, Phobjikha valley is the largest wintering ground with annual population of over 300 birds.

In the early nineties, Phobjikha received little over 100 cranes and the number has been steadily increasing each year with a record

count of 353 birds in 2005 -2006 winter. This winter, 292 cranes including 23 juveniles were recorded during the annual crane census which consists of series of counts conducted with high confidence level. With the available crane data, the average annual recruitment still remains below 11 percent against the standard robust recruitment requirement of 12 – 15 percent.

The status of the crane population in Phobjikha valley is considered stable with few cases of mortality recorded through observation.

However, the crane ecology will deteriorate if the mortality in the valley exceeds the annual recruitment percentage.

*Reference: [www.china.org.cn](http://www.china.org.cn)*



### Annual Crane Count for the winter of 2007 -2008

Year	Phobjikha	Khotokha	Bumthang	Bomdeling	Total
2007-2008	292	6	12	130	440

Source: Bomdeling Wildlife Sanctuary, Divisional Forest Office – Bumtha, Khotokha FMU and BNCIC – Phobjikha.

WORD SAFARI

In the following table, you will find ten species of bird from the book titled *Birds of Bhutan* by Carol Inskipp, Tim Inskipp and Richard Grimmett. The common names are given in the brackets. You need to look for the names that are typed in **bold** and underlined only.

1. Luscinia calliope  
(Siberian Rubythroat)
2. Luscinia pectoralis  
(white-tailed Rubythroat)
3. Luscinia **brunnea** (Indian Blue Robin)
4. Tarsiger cyanurus  
(Orange-flanked Bush Robin)
5. Tarsiger chrysaeus  
(Golden Bush Robin)
6. Tarsiger **indicus**  
(White-browed Bush Robin)
7. Tarsiger hyperythrus  
(Rufous-breasted Bush Robin)



R	G	J	K	B	C	X	S	L	F	P	A
F	U	L	I	C	A	T	A	U	C	F	H
Z	P	E	C	T	O	R	A	L	I	S	C
Q	M	D	J	A	W	I	G	I	F	N	J
M	A	S	T	C	L	E	Y	C	U	K	O
R	L	V	B	H	X	L	T	A	S	H	I
R	A	B	A	R	B	B	I	T	O	G	L
I	B	A	G	Y	U	I	Z	O	N	G	D
Z	A	L	A	S	A	N	A	O	P	I	N
I	R	R	I	A	C	D	N	S	C	E	Q
K	I	N	G	E	B	I	Z	E	Y	O	U
O	C	E	A	U	N	C	I	E	A	P	A
T	U	L	C	S	I	U	N	F	N	C	D
U	S	V	M	L	O	S	O	D	U	K	U
B	A	Y	O	S	A	U	L	A	R	I	S
H	Y	P	E	R	Y	T	H	R	U	S	C
R	S	P	N	T	H	I	M	P	S	H	U

8. Copsychus sularis  
(Oriental Magpie Robin)
9. Copsychus malabaricus  
(White-rumped Shama)
10. Saxicoloides fulcata  
(Indian Robin)



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**Climate Change**  
 Announcement  
 Interested to learn, contribute and be part of the responsible global climate change community?  
 The Royal Society of Protection of Nature is in the process of establishing a local team of to address the climate change issues in Bhutan in the form of news, article, publications, journals and other associated media by a group of people with different background. The core group of key individuals (20 to 30 including government, NGOs, academics, researchers, media, private sector employees) on individual capacity will be selected based on interest and commitment to work on climate change. Individuals with knowledge on climate change will be appreciated.  
 Interested individuals can send in your application along with CV to this address:  
 rspn@rspnbhutan.org with a copy to dsthshing@rspnbhutan.org.  
 Please mention **Climate Change Membership** on the subject column.  
 The deadline for submission of application is **April 15, 2008**.

CRANE STATISTICS	
Total Number of Cranes arrived in Phobjikha in 2007-2008 Winter	268
Juveniles	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>
Total Number of Cranes arrived in Phobjikha in 2006-2007 Winter	195
Juveniles	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>

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