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Finally Released



The release of the bird was witnessed by officials and local community

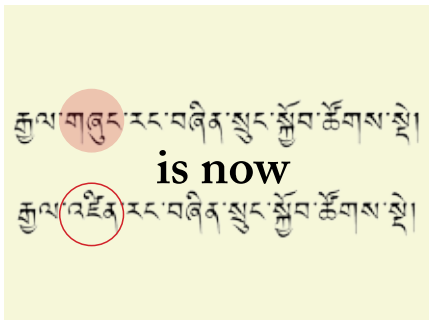
At 7.58 am, a White-bellied Heron weighing 5.6 kilograms was released from its flight pen at Bumitsawa in Pho Chu, Punakha. It was 134 days old at the time of the release from the research site. It was the first White-bellied Heron chick hatched in a captive breeding.

The successful release of the bird is the culmination of a 7-month project to raise the critically endangered species in captivity. With a global population of less than 200,

the Heron's future is imperiled. After years of studying the bird, RSPN, led by ecologist Rebecca Pradhan and in conjunction with experts from the San Diego Zoo, decided to explore the possibilities of captive breeding.

The juvenile Heron is tagged with a band numbered 32 on its right leg. It is also mounted with a 35gms Platform Terminal Transmitter (PTT) that will generate satellite data for continued monitoring.

>> Contd. on page 2



First Community Waste Management System Started in Phobjikha



Official innauguration of the community waste management system

After successfully founding Bhutan's first community-based solid waste management project, RSPN transferred control of the program to elected local authorities last month. The project is part of a long-standing commitment to conservation and development in Phobjikha valley, covering areas of community forestry, black-necked crane conservation, ecotourism, and environmental education. This project, funded by the JICA Bhutan office, aims to keep Phobjikha valley clean and free from waste while educating and empowering the local community and serving as a model for future programs elsewhere in Bhutan.

RSPN officially handed over the project

>> Contd. on page 2

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Finally Released



The release of the juvenile White-bellied Heron was witnessed by Dasho Dzungda of Punakha Dzongkhag, stakeholders and partner agencies. Over the years, Felburn Foundation via International Crane Foundation (ICF), San Diego Zoo via ICF (USA), WWF Bhutan Program, and Punatsangchu Hydro Project Authority have been supporting the study and habitat conservation in the Punatsangchu River Basin. We thank all donors, stakeholders and partner agencies in rendering support in this project.

It carefully examined the outside environment before it took off

Campus Clean Up in Phobjikha



The volunteers also fixed the fallen fence poles

Twenty-three employees from the Aman Kora Resort volunteered to clean the campus of the Black-necked Crane Information Centre (BNCIC) in Phobjikha. The volunteers helped the RSPN field staff in cleaning the campus, erecting the fallen fencing poles and cleaning up the interior of the Centre. Aman Kora Resort employees have also been involved in cleaning up the other areas in Phobjikha in the past. The RSPN family deeply appreciates the aid of these volunteers.

Study Tour



The participants walked through some of the nature trails

As part of its new Community-Based Sustainable Tourism project in Phobjikha, RSPN ran a study tour and consultative workshop. The program aimed at assessing the situation in the valley from the context of CBST – considering the available tourism products, services and opportunities and providing practical guidance to the new CBST project based on the field assessments.

The three-day program was attended by over 30 representatives from various governmental and private agencies. These included Nature Recreation and Ecotourism Division (NRED); Association of Bhutanese Tour

Operators (ABTO); Guide Association of Bhutan; Tourism Council of Bhutan (TCB); Phobjikha Environment Management Commission (PEMC); Wangdiphordang Dzongkhag Administration; Gross national Happiness Commission (GNHC); the local business community; Local Government (LG) and local community members.

The project team from RSPN and Japan Environmental Education Forum first explained the CBST project. They emphasized the im

>> *Contd. from page 1*

First Community Waste Management System Started in Phobjikha

to the local communities of Gangtey and Phobji Geogs on September 25th. Phobjikha Environment Management Committee (PEMC), comprised of representatives of both the gewogs, will be the local custodian to effectively manage the project. RSPN provided Nu. 100,000 as seed money for the management of the project, however, day to day expenses will be borne by the business communities and local residents.

This community-based solid waste management system is a holistic one, fully integrated into valley life. Local people can now dump their waste in the communal bins placed at strategic sites in all the villages across the valley. The wastes will be collected periodically and transported to the eco-friendly landfill located far from the settlements and complete with modern facilities such as leachate collection tank and gas pipes. Two local scrap dealers have been contracted to collect waste that can be recycled. Education and Awareness programs and a waste management guideline manual help locals understand the program's components and significance.

The inauguration of the program took place at the new landfill and was graced by Dasho Dzunggrab, Wangduephodrang dzongkhag, and JICA representative as well as school principals, sectors heads, RSPN officials and local leaders and people.

Crane Capture and Banding Program



Jigme Tshering (left) was one of the trainees with experts who got hands-on training

Cranes have been fascinating man since time immemorial not only for its elegance and beauty but also for its agile dancing, flight formations and loud trumpeting calls. These birds need large areas of forests, wetlands and barren land for feeding, roosting as well as for breeding. However, with increasing developmental activities around the world, forests are continuously being cleared and wetlands drained out.

Cranes cover thousands of miles and sometimes pass over dozens of countries each year during their migration. These vast distances make their patterns hard to chart, but understanding even the temporary habitats used for stopovers and staging is necessary for conservation of critical habitats.

Trans- boundary Migratory study with radio and color tagging of these birds is one method of finding out the exact locations of stops on their seasonal journey. The method also shows the route and time taken during

the migration. This data not only provides information to scientists, but also enables collaborative conservation of the bird and its habitat among countries of the region.

One such program is being carried out by the Crane Conservation Germany (Kranichschutz Deutschland) each year since its establishment in the early nineties. I was fortunate to have been invited to participate for the 2011 crane banding program in Germany from 14 June 02 July 2011 with the support of the International Crane Foundation and the Crane Conservation Germany. Two French and a Spaniard were also invited to join the operation.

Three study areas were chosen namely, Karow, Diepholzer Moorniederung and Nordvorpommern. All the spotted nests and sites are recorded prior to the operation and searched accordingly for the family. The information is recorded by local volunteers and Crane Conservation Germany team every

breeding season.

The method for capturing the cranes is to start very early in the morning and drive into the vast open meadow and once the cranes are spotted two runners dash towards the young crane and capture it by hand. If the reported family is not spotted on the open meadow the team split and scan around the nests in the forest.

Once the cranes are caught, the team ring, measure, weighs and fit transmitters which take around 10 minutes. The birds are then released and the team leaves the area as quick as possible.

A team of local volunteers then monitor the banded cranes over weeks before they start their autumn migration. Their transmitter's signal is then searched for by other volunteers stationed at stop over points along the long migration route and all data fed back to the Kranichschutz Deutschland team.

Change in RSPN's Dzongkha name



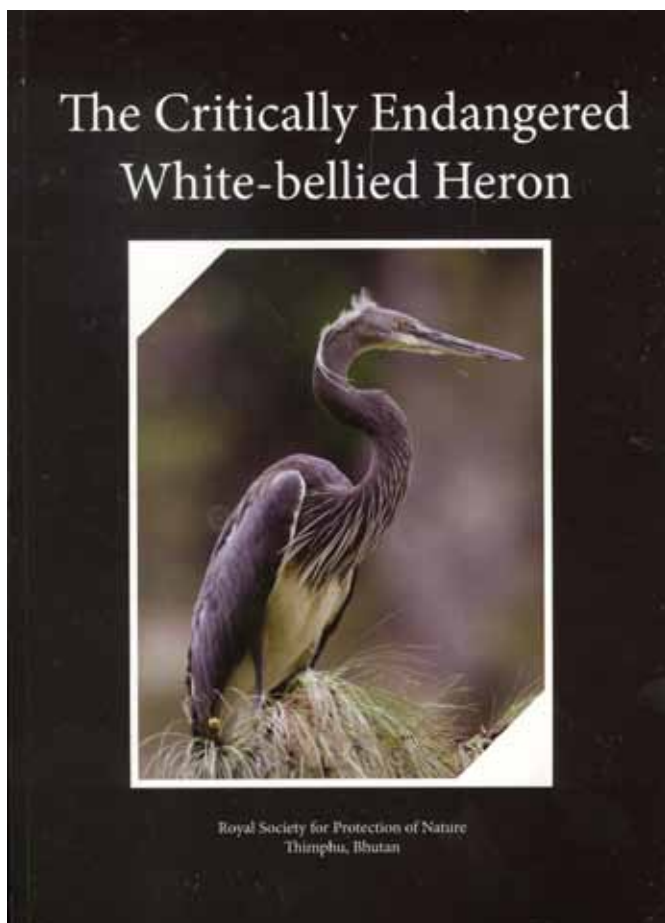
Previous name:

ཀྲུལ་གཞུང་རང་བཞིན་སྲུང་སྐྱོབ་ཚོགས་སྡེ།

Current name

ཀྲུལ་འཛིན་རང་བཞིན་སྲུང་སྐྱོབ་ཚོགས་སྡེ།

Book Released



This is the first of its kind published on White-bellied heron in Bhutan

RSPN's Chairman, DASHO Sangay Thinley (Rtd.) officially launched the book titled "The Critically Endangered White-bellied Heron" at the celebration of Global Tiger Day organized jointly by Wildlife Conservation Division and WWF Bhutan program office. The book is a result of initiative taken by the Research Team of RSPN and provides an overview of the White-bellied Heron population, distribution and status in the country as well as an overview of RSPN's research activities in the field of heron conservation. The publication also features rare pictures of the bird taken in the Phochu area in Punakha.

There are about 26 individual White-bellied

Hérons in Bhutan of the total estimated 200 in the world. As with many species, conservation is increasingly challenging due to socio-economic development and anthropogenic threats. In the case of White-bellied Herons in the Punatsangchu River Basin, hydro power projects have been a major concern and challenge for its habitat conservation and preservation.

The book is the first to provide extensive information on the particular heron species in Bhutan and in the world. It is aimed at educating the general mass both within and outside the country. More importantly it is intended to reach the politicians, and influence policy and decision makers. Their political will and support are crucial to the very survival of this critically endangered species endemic to the eastern Himalayas.

RSPN has been involved in the White-bellied Heron conservation project since 2003. Over the years Felburn Foundation via International Crane Foundation (ICF), San Diego Zoo via ICF (USA), WWF Bhutan Program, and Punatsangchu Hydro Project Authority have been supporting in the study and habitat conservation in the Punatsangchu River Basin.

After the launch, RSPN distributed copies of the book and bookmarks with caption: "Save the White Bellied Heron" to the guests gathered.

Experts Discuss Food Security

Underscoring the urgent need for a strong regional collaboration to ensure food security in the face of climate change, delegates from the four countries of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal said the impact of climate change in the Eastern Himalayas cannot be undermined.

In a two-day expert group meeting held in New Delhi, India, the participants agreed that a clear policy on food security and climate change must be introduced and implemented in the region.

The delegates said that despite the rich biodiversity and diverse traditional communities, the four countries remain extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change because of the fragile ecology of the region.

Therefore, the experts agreed that there is an urgent need for the exchange of information and technology among the four countries. They said ensuring food security should continue to remain the top priority of the four governments.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for

an active and healthy life.

However, the major threats to food security in the region include increasing population, increasing development activities, declining arable lands, and degradation of natural resources.

The meeting, therefore, is expected to identify the issues of common interests and formulate a regional action plan on food security. The meeting will also look into and suggest institutional mechanisms for implementation of the regional action plan and agree on a set of recommendations to be included in the Climate Summit declaration in November 2011. In his opening remarks, the deputy director general of Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Dr. A.K. Singh, said the participants must focus primarily on exchange of relevant material like germplasm, technology transfer, integrated farming systems for sustainable production, rainwater harvesting structures, agricultural mechanization, and the establishment of institutional mechanisms.

The executive secretary of the Climate Summit Secretariat, Tashi Jamtsho, said the meeting will result in a regional framework of action on food security, and will discuss and agree on proposed declaration points.

The leaders of delegation presented papers

on the current situation analysis in relation to food security in their respective countries. They noted that there were many common challenges facing the farmers of the four countries that called for common solutions. The delegates discussed food policy environment in the four countries, the existing capacity and knowledge, and technology and research focus. They also identified common points to be included in the regional food road map.

The two-day expert group meeting on "Building Climate Resilience for Food Security and Rural Livelihoods" is part of the build-up to the Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas – Bhutan 2011. It is jointly organized by the environment and forests ministry and the Indian Council of Agricultural Research of the agriculture ministry of the government of India.

The meeting is one of four regional expert group meetings before the actual Summit on 19 November 2011. The expert group meeting on 'Water' was organized by Bangladesh on 2 & 3 July 2011 in Dhaka. Similarly, the expert group meeting on 'Biodiversity' was held in Thimphu, Bhutan, on 12 and 13 July 2011; and the expert group meeting on 'Energy' will be organized by Nepal on 28 and 29 July 2011.

Source:

<http://www.bhutanclimatesummit.org.bt>

Forest laws and policies in Rwanda, The Gambia and the US beat out 17 other nominees to win 2011 Future Policy Award

Rwanda's National Forest Policy was proclaimed the winner of the 2011 Future Policy Award. The Gambia's Community Forest Policy and the US Lacey Act with its amendment of 2008 received the Silver Awards. The three winning policies which most effectively contribute to the conservation and sustainable development of forests for the benefit of current and future generations were announced on 21 September 2011 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The announcement will be followed by an awards ceremony at the Central Park Zoo convened by the World Future Council, the Secretariats of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Forest Stewardship Council, and hosted at the Wildlife Conservation Society.

"Exemplary policy solutions do exist. The Future Policy Award celebrates the best of them. The aim of the award is to raise global awareness for these policies and speed up policy action. We need visionary policies which support a sustainable and just world and protect future generations," says Alexandra Wandel, Director of the World Future Council, an international policy research organization that provides decision-makers with effective policy solutions. The 2011 Future Policy Award shines a spotlight on the success stories and challenges faced by the world's forests and the people who depend on them.

"Rwanda has sought not only to make its forests a national priority, but has also used them as a platform to revolutionize its stances on women's rights and creating a healthy environment," says Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Honorary World Future Councilor and Founder of the Green

Belt Movement.

Despite continuing population and land pressures, Rwanda is on course to reach its goal of increasing forest cover to 30% of total land area achieving a major reversal in the trend of declining forest cover. Forest cover has already increased by 37% since 1990. Massive reforestation and planting activities that promoted indigenous species and involved the local population were undertaken, and new measures such as agro-forestry and education about forest management were implemented. Rwanda has also been a pioneer in banning plastic bags: in 2008 a bill was introduced to prohibit the manufacture, import, use and sale of polythene bags in the country.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Honorary World Future Councilor visited Rwanda in February this year together with Goodwill Ambassador Edward Norton and states: "Rwanda is an inspiration for the world. The national policy to heal and restore nature, through a border-to-border restoration programme, will create the basis for a healthy and resilient society of the future. This policy is placing Rwanda firmly on the map as a global environmental leader, and I hope many other countries will follow."

The first Silver Award went to The Gambia's Community Forest Policy, which has achieved sustainable forest management and poverty alleviation by handing control of forests to the communities that use them.

Eduardo Rojas Briales, Assistant Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, states: "The success of the Gambia's Community Forest Policy proves that even in the world's poorest countries, with the right policies and adequate legislation in place rural populations can benefit economically and significantly improve their food security. In Gambia the innovative policy included forest tenure tran-

sition from state ownership to management by local communities, which enabled them to reduce illegal logging and benefit from using the forest products. It is vital to acknowledge such achievements and draw the attention of policy-makers around the globe to possible solutions which could be applied in other countries in the future."

Ecological gains from forest protection include an increase in climate change mitigation through a decrease in desertification, forest fires and illegal logging. The Gambia has managed to buck a strong deforestation trend in Africa with over 350 villages managing twelve percent of the country's forests, with a net increase in forest cover of 8.5 percent over the last two decades.

The second Silver Award went to the US Lacey Act amendment of 2008 which prohibits all trade in wood and plant products that are knowingly illegally sourced from a US state or any foreign country. "The Lacey Act enforces the environmental law of even the weakest of countries in the most powerful way. If all countries followed its example, environmental law would be globally enforced and our biosphere would be protected," says jury member Tewolde Berhan Egziabher, Director General, Environmental Protection Authority, Ethiopia and World Future Councilor. The strength of the Act lies in its ability to target and place responsibility on every stage of the timber supply chain. It has forced importers to take responsibility for their wood products and has already produced positive results in increasing due diligence assessments and demand for certified wood products.

Jan McAlpine, Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, states: "Celebrating innovation to benefit the world's forests is one of the primary objectives of the International Year of Forests, 2011. This year's Future Policy Award recognizes policies that have succeeded in translating a vision for a sustainable future into tangible action. The UNFF applauds the three winning governments in Rwanda, The Gambia and the US for their extraordinary sustainable forest management policies: incorporating social, environmental and economic actions into a sustainable future for their countries."

An international jury composed of experts from academia, government, international bodies, civil society and indigenous groups from all five continents had assessed the nominations against the World Future Council's Seven Principles for Future Just Lawmaking. Honorable mentions were also bestowed upon forest policies from Bhutan, Nepal and Switzerland. In total twenty policies from sixteen countries were nominated for the award.

Source: *The World Future Council*



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WORD SAFARI

In this edition, we have compiled bears, dogs, and weasels and the park they are found in. We will publish this data in series of our next Rangzhin editions. (Source: *Bhutan's Natural Heritage - A Legacy of the Monarchs*, RSPN, Thimphu)

Find and encircle the words which are **bold** and **underlined**. We have encircled one to help you get start with.

IUCN Status	Major Carnivorous Mammals		Protected Areas**									
	Common name	Latin name	J D N P	J S W N P	B W S	R M N P	T N P	S W S	P W S	W C P	T S N R	K W S
Endangered	Black Bear	<i>Ursus thibetanus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Endangered	Red Panda (herbivore)	<i>Ailurus fulgens</i>	X	X	X		X	X		X		
Vulnerable	Sloth Bear	<i>Melursus ursinus</i>		X		X	X		X		X	X
Endangered	Wild Dog (Dhole)	<i>Cuon alpinus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	X							X		
Lower risk	Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Uncommon	Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	X	X	X		X	X		X	X	
	Hyena	<i>Hyaena hyaena</i>				X			X		X	X
Endangered	Spotted Linsang	<i>Prionodon pardicolor</i>		X		X			X			
3 Vulnerable	Otter species	<i>Lutra spp.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
1 Vulnerable	Weasel species	<i>Mustella spp.</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lower risk	Yellow throated Marten	<i>Martes flavigula</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
	Ferret Badgers	<i>Melogale spp.</i>				X			X			
	Mongoose species	<i>Herpestes spp.</i>		X		X			X		X	X

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


** **JDNP**: Jigme Dorji National Park; **JSWNP**: Jigme Singye Wangchuck National Park; **BWS**: Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary; **RMNP**: Royal Manas National Park; **TNP**: Thrumshingla National Park; **SWS**: Sakten Wildlife Sanctuary; **PWS**: Phibsoo Wildlife Sanctuary; **WCP**: Wangchuck Centennial Park; **TSNR**: Toorsa Strict Nature Reserve; **KWS**: Khaling Wildlife Sanctuary

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